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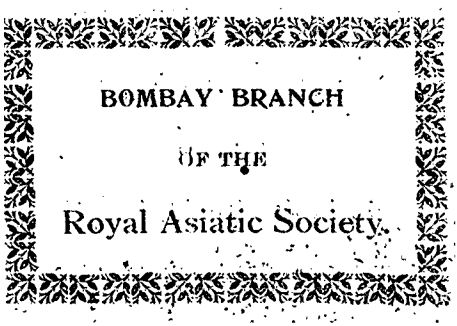

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A

CONNECTION

OF

SACRED AND PROFANE HISTORY,

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FROM

THE DEATH OF JOSHUA TO THE DECLINE OF THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

(INTENDED TO COMPLETE THE WORKS OF SHUCKFORD AND PRIDEAUX.)

BY THE

REV. MICHAEL RUSSELL, L.L.D.,

EPISCOPAL MINISTER, LEITH.

VOLUME I.

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RIGHT REVEREND SIR,

IT gives me much satisfaction to have this opportunity of expressing the sense which I have long entertained of your personal friendship, as well as of your high professional eminence.

With the obligations of private kindness, the public have indeed no concern; but there can be few individuals in this country, and those not much acquainted with the annals of literature, who are not aware of the great services which you have rendered to its cause; and, particularly, of the valuable assistance which, from time to time, you have supplied to the biblical critic and to the theological student.

To you, therefore, with peculiar propriety, may a work be dedicated which has for its object the elucidation of ancient history, and especially of that portion of it which is more immediately con-

nected with the oracles of Divine truth. Your own labours in this department have added greatly to your well-founded reputation, both as a scholar and as a philosopher; and, in consequence of the learning and care which you bestowed upon your edition of Stackhouse, the speculations of that unequal author may now be read, at once with greater safety and with greater profit.

That you may long preside over a Church which assuredly has cause to feel proud in the credit attached to your name, is the sincere wish of,

RIGHT REVEREND SIR,

Your most obliged,

And most dutiful Servant,

MICHAEL RUSSELL.

PREFACE.

THE object of these volumes is to complete the learned works of Shuckford and Prideaux, which have been long held in high estimation by the public. The labours of the Dean of Norwich were indeed directed to a purpose somewhat different from that of his immediate successor in the same field of research. He undertook to fill up, with materials derived from the pages of Profane authors, the interval between the conclusion of the annals which are contained in the canonical Jewish Scriptures, and the inspired narrative as it is resumed in the Christian Writings about five centuries afterwards: and this task he performed with so much success, that few books have enjoyed a more extensive and enduring popularity than the "Old and New Testament connected, in the History of the Jews and neighbouring Nations, from the Declension of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah to the Time of Christ."

It is well known that it was the intention of Dr Shuckford to bring down the narrative of Sacred History from

the creation of the world to the epoch at which Prideaux begins his valuable performance. In the conclusion of the preface to his third volume he states, that, "if I find my endeavours continue acceptable to the public, I shall, as soon as I can, in one volume more, offer the remaining part of this undertaking." But he did not live to complete his plan; and the work, accordingly, which should have extended to the reign of Ahaz, proceeds no farther than to the times of Joshua; leaving about eight hundred years of a very important period to occupy the pen of some future writer.

Considering the facts now mentioned, it is somewhat surprising that the title-page of Dr Shuckford's book should have continued, until the present day, to announce his labours, according to the original extent of his undertaking, and not according to what he actually accomplished. His work is denominated "The Sacred and Profane History of the World connected, from the Creation of the World to the Dissolution of the Assyrian Empire, at the Death of Sardanapalus; and to the Declension of the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel, under the Reigns of Ahaz and Pekah." But, as has been already stated, his narrative descends no lower than to the occupation, by the Israelites, of the Holy Land, under the immediate successor of Moses. The numerous events, therefore, which took place under the government of the Judges; in the brilliant reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon; as well as during those of the successive princes of Israel and Judah, till the ascendency

of the Assyrian power threatened the liberty of both these nations, remained to be embodied in a continuous narrative, as also to be connected with the contemporaneous history of such other tribes and kingdoms of the East as had any intercourse with the descendants of Israel.

It cannot have escaped the notice of the reader, that the word *connection* in the volumes of Shuckford, as well as in those which are now submitted to his perusal, has a meaning considerably different from that which it conveys in the writings of Prideaux. The last-named author connected two historical points by filling up the gap between them: the former attempted nothing more than to illustrate the early annals of the Hebrew people by a reference to the condition of the neighbouring nations at the same period, and to determine thereby the dates of certain great events upon which the synchronism of ancient history might be clearly established.

The part of my undertaking which is now laid before the public comprehends the times of the Judges, and terminates with the commencement of the regal government in the days of Samuel; it being my intention, in other two volumes, to carry down the narrative to the point at which the very learned author of "The Old and New Testament Connected" began his inquiries. It is, perhaps, hardly worthy of remark, that both Prideaux and Shuckford brought out their respective works in separate portions and at various periods,—an example, however, which I should not have been solicitous to follow, had not the

time and the materials employed in the composition of the first and second Books greatly exceeded the limits which were originally contemplated.

The third and fourth volumes will contain, together with a view of the civil and religious history of the Hebrews, an outline of the chronology, literature, and policy of the Egyptians, the Chinese, and the Hindus. At the close of the last volume there will be inserted a copious Index to the whole work, together with a Chronological Table, exhibiting a connected view of the principal events which compose the history of ancient nations.

No one can write a work of any research in Edinburgh without having to express his obligations to Dr Irving and to Mr David Laing. The intimate knowledge of books possessed by both these gentlemen is only equalled by their politeness and attention; and the former of whom, in particular, as librarian to the Faculty of Advocates, shows himself at all times ready to meet the generous views of the distinguished body whom he represents, by granting every facility to those who undertake to advance the interests of literature.

But, on this occasion, my special thanks are due to William Erskine, Esq., the accomplished editor of Baber's Memoirs, who, in the most friendly manner, allowed me access to his valuable collection, in which are some very rare treatises, printed as well as in manuscript, on oriental history and antiquities.

LEITH, *April*, 1827.

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INTRODUCTION.

To the reader who shall enter in earnest upon the inquiries which are pursued in this work, it will soon become manifest that, in most cases, the study of ancient history resolves itself into a series of chronological disquisitions respecting the origin of nations and the relative antiquity of events. The last thing which appears of importance to the annalist of a rude age, is to mark the precise order of the occurrences which he records, and more especially to afford the means of determining their place in the map of time, by noting their distance from some common point to which they might all be referred.

In the more ancient portion of the Old Testament, for example, we have to rely almost solely upon that uncertain standard which is founded upon the average duration of human life and the length of a generation,—a mode of reckoning which, as it proceeds upon a principle at no time fixed, and assumes the constancy of elements which are subject to an incessant but irregular variation, cannot be applied, with any degree of confidence, to establish the date of events removed from one another by the lapse of centuries. From the Flood to the days of Abraham, the

generation, or period between the birth of a father and that of his eldest son, became gradually contracted; but as the rate of diminution was far from being uniform, we cannot, it is obvious, on that principle alone, arrive at any satisfactory conclusion in regard to the number of years which passed from the nativity of Arphaxad to the infancy of the patriarch whose name has just been mentioned. Had the inspired historians, in their narrative, been led to measure the lapse of time and the succession of events, by a reference to the epoch of creation, or even to that of the universal deluge, we should have had no difficulty in finding the proper place of every other occurrence, as well as the true limits of every particular epoch.

From the exode down to the era of Christianity, the life of the human being, having fallen more nearly to its present extent, supplies a better standard for determining the order and distance of the main facts which constitute the history of the Hebrew people; and hence, from the death of Moses to the decline of the Jewish state, chronology shines with a much clearer and more steady light; conducting the historical student to results which not only harmonize with the leading details of the sacred annals, but also correspond to the general condition of society at that distant period, and to the records of all contemporary kingdoms.

In proportion to the obscurity which hangs over the remote ages of the world, the greater is the difference of opinion which prevails among the learned, in respect to the length of the period which intervened between the creation and the flood, as well as of that which passed between the latter event and the birth of Abraham. The antediluvian epoch is found to vary in the works of ancient authors not less than seven hundred years; while the second interval just mentioned continues to be bound-

ed by limits equally uncertain; extending, according to some chronographers, to nearly eleven centuries, and being, according to others, restricted to less than three.

Those who are not acquainted with the writings of the ancient historians, must be surprised when they find that the system of dates which has been adopted in the authorised version of the Scriptures differs from the chronological conclusions which are now commonly held, to the full amount of fourteen hundred years. The numbers which appear in the margin of our English bibles were inserted on the authority of Usher and Lloyd; prelates, it is true, who were not less esteemed for their great learning than for their zeal and integrity. But, in a subject of this kind, where the truth must be discovered by an examination of ancient records, the value of every man's opinion must be determined by the evidence which he produces in support of it, and by the soundness of the reasoning which he employs in weighing the facts and testimony on which the question has usually been decided. In chronology, it is well known, the name of Usher as well as the greater name of Newton has long ceased to command any special attention. Each of these distinguished authors was led astray by the prevailing habits of his own mind, and by the favourite pursuits of his age. The primate, from the respect which he entertained for Hebrew literature, put an undue degree of confidence in the opinions of the Rabbis; the philosopher, on the other hand, assured himself that a basis for an infallible system of chronology might be found in the deductions of physical astronomy.

Let it be remembered, at the same time, that the abbreviated scheme, adopted by Usher from the Masorete Jews, is recent in its origin when compared with the more comprehensive chronology of the Septuagint. This last

was used before the advent of Christ; was followed by the fathers of the church; and appears not to have been called in question till, in the eighth century, a disposition to exchange it for the Rabbinical method of reckoning was first manifested by the Venerable Bede. It has been observed, however, that, prior to the era of the Reformation, the views of this celebrated monk of Durham had made but little progress among the clergy; and that when Luther roused the attention of Europe to the errors of the ancient communion, the authority of the Greek version, and the unanimous consent of the primitive writers, were still found to regulate all their calculations concerning the age of the world. In the warmth of the controversy which ensued, the more rigid protestants were induced to rank among the corruptions of the Western church, the chronology of the Samaritan Pentateuch, of the Seventy, and of Josephus; and, without taking time or pains to examine the grounds of their opinion, they resolutely pronounced that the numbers of the original text were to be preferred to those of any version; and forthwith bestowed the weight of their authority upon the Jewish side of the question, and opposed that which the Christians had maintained from the days of the apostles.

When the clamour and animosity excited by the great event now alluded to had passed away, studious men began to inquire whether the change which had been introduced into the chronological scheme of the protestants was placed on the same immoveable foundation which supported the rest of their system. The ardent mind of Isaac Vossius entered upon this investigation, supported by that high learning and zeal which enabled him to impress the character of his genius upon every subject which he handled; and at length, in his celebrated tract "De Vera

Ætate Mundi," he laid before the world the fruit of his researches, and challenged discussion on the general grounds of historical testimony, both sacred and profane.

The opinions of Vossius were not allowed to pass without animadversion. He was answered by Hornius, who, to support the authority of the modern Hebrew text, made use of arguments which do not carry conviction into any unprejudiced mind; and thus, although we cannot admit all the conclusions of the former writer respecting the antiquity of the globe, we are compelled to reject the greater part of those which his antagonist has laboured to substitute in their place.

The interest which the learned world necessarily felt in this controversy had not entirely cooled, when Pezron, in his ingenious work entitled *L'Antiquité des Tems retablie et defendue, contre les Juifs et les nouveaux Chronologistes*, avowed himself as a champion of the doctrines maintained by Vossius, and undertook to establish their truth on the basis of history and criticism. This able work made a great impression among the literary class in France; some of whom admired it for its talent and research, while others viewed it with apprehension on account of the free manner in which it examined questions which, during a long period, had only been viewed on one side, or were permitted to remain among those indisputable maxims on which the church had placed the seal of her authority. The positions of the author were accordingly soon assailed by Martianay, a Benedictine monk, and by Lequien, a member of the Dominican order; both of whom brought to the task in which they engaged a competent measure of learning, to which the latter added some degree of prudence and moderation. The Benedictine, indeed, afterwards attempted to crush at once Pezron and his cause, by bring-

ing down upon him the heavy hand of ecclesiastical discipline; but the Cistercian brother defended himself before the archbishop of Paris with so much ability and good faith, that his book was allowed the equitable chance of being read and examined, without bearing upon it the indelible stigma of official condemnation. The reply to Martianay, entitled *Defense de l'Antiquité des Tems*, contains a large body of valuable materials on the history and chronology of the ancients, which has proved of the greatest use to all subsequent writers in the same department of study.

This interesting subject enjoyed, in the early part of last century, the great advantage of being freely and minutely examined by some of the ablest members of the French Academy, and particularly by the wise and industrious Freret, whose labours contributed to shed a new light on some important sections of Assyrian chronology. The Memoirs of that learned body constitute of themselves a valuable library, on all those historical and antiquarian topics on which it has been found necessary to call in the aid of modern science to illustrate the statements of ancient authors. It is a work equally indispensable to him who reads, and to him who writes on the events and manners which distinguished the early ages of society.

The treatise of Mr Hayes, on the Chronology of the Septuagint, is, so far as I know, the first regular publication by an English author, on the genealogical numbers of the Greek Scriptures compared with those of the Hebrew text. This ingenious volume was given to the world anonymously; and is, perhaps, not yet so well known, even to professional students, as its merit deserves. It is particularly valuable for a successful attempt made, in the form of an appendix, to prove that the Chaldean and Egyptian anti-

quities are perfectly consistent with the sacred history of the Jews, when viewed through the medium of the Septuagint computation.

It was not, however, till the middle of the last century, that the indefatigable Jackson produced, in three volumes quarto, his great work, the *Chronological Antiquities; or the Antiquities and Chronology of the most Ancient Kingdoms, from the Creation of the World for the Space of Five Thousand Years.* He adopted, in general, the principles of Vossius, Pezron, and Hayes, but reduced the interval between Adam and the Christian era to 5426 years. Pezron estimated this period at 5872 years, Vossius at 5598, both of which are considerably too high; for it will be found, I think, upon a careful examination of the facts adduced in the Preliminary Dissertation which follows these introductory remarks, that the computation which accords best with the ancient Scriptures, as well as with the several histories which have been derived from them, does not extend the number of years from the creation to the advent of Christ beyond 5441.

In the very beginning of the present century, the Reverend Dr Hales, rector of Killesandra in Ireland, published the first volume of a laborious work, of which the title is, *A New Analysis of Chronology, in which an Attempt is made to explain the History and Antiquities of the primitive Nations of the World, and the Prophecies relating to them, on Principles tending to remove the Imperfections and Discordance of preceding Systems.* His undertaking extended ultimately to three large volumes; comprehending a good deal of miscellaneous discussion, and a quantity of materials which may, on some occasions, prove useful to the divine as well as to the ecclesiastical historian, but which, upon the whole, possess very little interest for the student of chronology and antiquities properly

so called. Dr Hales has added nothing of any value to the work of his predecessor Jackson. He controverts, indeed, the opinion of the latter as to the existence of the second Cainan, the son of Arphaxad; and opposes himself thereby not only to that distinguished author, but also to the Septuagint, Demetrius, Eupolemus, Josephus, and the gospel according to St Luke. He, moreover, stretches beyond its proper limits, the interval between the exode and the foundation of Solomon's temple; making it 621 years, instead of the more correct number 592, as confirmed by Josephus. In like manner, he reduces the period from Adam to the era of redemption to 5411 years; being 15 years shorter than the computation of Jackson, and 30 years shorter than that to which it is extended in the following pages.

Mr Faber, in his important work on Pagan Idolatry, has made some judicious observations on the chronology of ancient history in its two great departments. Generally speaking, he follows the footsteps of Dr Hales in the postdiluvian period of the inspired narrative, and agrees with him in his conclusions respecting the length of the interval which must have elapsed between the Flood and the birth of Abraham; rejecting, of course, the abbreviated scheme of the Masorete Hebrew text, which reduces that interval to less than one-third of its real extent. He places, however, his chief reliance upon the Samaritan Pentateuch; which he thinks has been preserved, by the special providence of God, to assist us in our investigations into the chronological antiquities of a remote and very obscure period of sacred history.

The latest work on this subject is the "Origines" of Sir William Drummond; in which the learned author likewise conducts his inquiries on the ground of the Septuagint chronology. In regard to the antediluvian ages, it is per-

haps of little consequence, as far as the consistency of historical records is concerned, whether we adopt the comprehensive scheme of the Greek Scriptures, or confine ourselves to the narrower limits of the Hebrew original; but, for the epoch which begins with the government of Noah in the renovated world, and ends with the nativity of the son of Terah, it is absolutely necessary to the harmony of the sacred narrative, as well as to its agreement with the annals of other countries, that we follow the numeration of the Seventy and of the Samaritan Pentateuch. According to the Masorete text, Noah and Abraham lived more than half a century together; Shem survived many years that father of the faithful, and was even a contemporary of Esau and Jacob; flourishing among the twelfth and thirteenth generations of his own descendants. To such strange facts, however, Moses in his history makes not the slightest allusion. He, certainly, was not aware that the son of Noah and the grandsons of Abraham lived in the same age; and surely had Shem continued to exist in the days of these latter patriarchs, when the covenant was renewed with the progenitor of the Hebrew nation, and clearer prospects of Christianity were revealed to his family, it is impossible to believe that his name could have been altogether omitted in the pages of the inspired penman.

For some farther remarks on this subject, the reader is referred to the Preliminary Dissertation on Ancient Chronology, where, at the ninety-third and following pages, I have pointed out a few of the grosser absurdities which arise from the contracted scheme of the Rabbinical text. All the writers whom I have mentioned, Vossius, Pezron, Hayes, Jackson, Hales, Faber, and Drummond, reject it without hesitation; as being glaringly inconsistent not only with the records of other nations, but even with the sacred history of the ancient Hebrews themselves. So

difficult, indeed, has it been found to reconcile the chronology of the modern Jews with the annals of certain Asiatic kingdoms, that, as Pezron informs us, the Jesuit missionaries, who were employed in China, deemed it necessary to come back to Rome to ask permission to use the Septuagint calculation, in order to satisfy the scruples of the better-informed classes in that singular country.*

It may be allowable to repeat the remark, that the chronological system which is adopted in these volumes is so far from being new, that it may be described as the most ancient which has yet been known to the Christian church. In the works of the earliest writers who undertook to illustrate the doctrines and history of our holy faith, the numbers of the Septuagint are uniformly employed to measure the succession of the several events to which their arguments bear a reference. We find not in their computations any evidence that they were even acquainted with the abridged method which the Rabbis have attempted to introduce: and throughout the Eastern empire in particular, the Hebrew chronology remained unknown or unregarded during the lapse of fifteen centuries. Even in the Western church, as has been already remarked, the era of the Reformation found the clergy still attached to the calculations which were handed down to them in the volumes of Clement, Theophilus, and Eusebius; and which, in fact, had never been challenged except by a few obscure partizans of the Rabbinical school, who urged the authority of manuscripts of which they understood neither the import nor the history.

It has been hinted above, that the ardour of opposition to the see of Rome, which animated some of the German

* Defense de l'Antiquité des Tems, &c. p. 535.

reformers, paved the way among the latter for the reception of the Rabbinical chronology; which, till that period, had made but small progress in any part of the great ecclesiastical establishment of southern Europe. The Martyrology of the Roman church was still regulated according to the principles of the Septuagint computation; while it does not appear that, in the version of the Scriptures authorised by the priesthood, the dates were fixed upon any other recognized or determinate system. But the arguments of the Protestants excited a spirit of inquiry among the Catholics, and, at the same time, demonstrated the expediency of selecting a particular translation of the Sacred Writings, to be established as the special form in which they wished their faithful people to consult the word of God. The Vulgate, accordingly, for the greater part of which we are indebted to St Jerome, received the sanction of the Western church as the most approved interpretation of the Hebrew oracles; and hence, as the learned presbyter of Antioch translated from a copy of the Jewish Scriptures which had undergone the process of chronological amendment suggested by the school of Tiberias, the Rabbinical scale of numbers became, thenceforth, to the Roman catholic, the authorised standard for measuring the dates of all ancient history.

It may be observed, accordingly, that the first of the popish writers who, after the Reformation, entered into this field of inquiry, followed closely the authority of Jerome and the numbers of the Hebrew text. Scaliger, Petavius, Martianay, and Lequien, afford examples of this deference for the established faith in the article of chronology.* Nor

* Though I have here ranked Joseph Scaliger among Popish writers, I am perfectly aware that, in the latter part of his life, he adopted the sentiments of Luther.

was it till a period considerably later, that a good catholic could discover the means of rendering his love of historical truth consistent with his respect for the decisions of his church. Even among protestants there long existed a feeling of reverence for the original language of the Old Testament, which prevented the exercise of that free and manly criticism which attaches a greater value to the meaning of words than to their antiquity or grammatical form. Of Usher, for example, it is observed by Dr Hales, that to him principally we owe the publication of the Samaritan Pentateuch, which first began to lessen the superstitious attachment of the learned to the *Hebrew Verity*, as it was called, or the supposed immaculate purity of the Masorete Hebrew text. But though his own private opinion always was, that the Hebrew copies of the Old Testament were no less liable to the errors of transcribers than those of the New Testament and of all other books, yet he scrupled to incur the charge of innovation.*

Having found it necessary to dissent from the reasoning of two such writers as Jackson and Hales, respecting the length of the period between the exode of the Hebrews under Moses and the building of the temple in the third year of Solomon's reign, I request the attention of the reader to the grounds on which I have attempted to establish the accuracy of Josephus, and the accordance of his statement

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* "Ad me quod attinet sententia mea hæc perpetuo fuit, Hebræum *Veteris* Testamenti codicem scribarum erroribus non minus esse obnoxium quam *Novi* codicem et *libros alios omnes*."—*De Sept. Versione Syntagm.* p. 219.

"The system of Usher has prevailed principally in the British empire, and among the divines of the reformed church on the continent of Europe: that of Petavius among the divines of the church of Rome. The dates of Usher chiefly have been annexed to the last translation of the Bible, and established by public authority; but the system itself being radically defective, these dates must necessarily be erroneous, and therefore ought to be rectified, as furnishing a plausible ground for impeaching the veracity and credibility of Holy Writ to sceptics and infidels."—*Hales*, vol. i. p. 22.

with the declaration of Scripture. The address of St Paul to the people of Antioch supplies us with a date which has proved of the greatest use in fixing the limits of the interval in question. He reminded the Jews, that, about the time of forty years, the Almighty suffered the manners of their fathers in the wilderness: "And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to them by lot. And *after that* he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years."* The particulars may be given as follows:—

	Years.
From the exode to the death of Moses	40
From the death of Moses to the division of the land,	6
From the division of the land to Samuel the prophet,	450
Government of Samuel alone	12
Reign of Saul	40
Reign of David	40
Beginning of Solomon's reign	3
	591

Now, the author of the Jewish Antiquities relates, that, from the departure of the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt to the foundation of Solomon's temple there were 592 years; in other words, that 591 complete years had passed away, and that the building of the sacred edifice was commenced in the 592d. But it will be seen

* Acts xiii. 18, 19, 20, 21.

that Jackson reduces this period to 579 years; and that Hales, on still more questionable ground, extends it to 621; while Fourmont, the author of Critical Reflexions on the Origin of Ancient Nations, who appears to have had some unknown hypothesis to support, makes bold to suggest that the passage in the Acts has been vitiated, and that, instead of 450, we should read 355!*

In tracing the steps of Vossius, Jackson, and Hales, I have necessarily arrived at a result very different from the conclusions to which Usher was led by his chronological researches into sacred history, and may thereby, perhaps, have exposed myself to the censure of that numerous class of readers who confide more in authority than in argument. The first of the writers just named was, by an angry antagonist, threatened with divine vengeance for departing from the usual method of computation. "God," said Hornius, "will, in his own time, destroy the works of the Devil, and those who are blinded by a groundless belief in antiquity."† But, in our defence, let it be once more repeated, that I have merely endeavoured to restore the scheme of numbers which was used by the best historians of the East prior to the Christian era; which obtained the sanction of the apostles and their immediate successors; which prevailed in the purest ages of the church, and has been transmitted to us in the volumes of the most

* A l'égard du passage des Actes, c'est à dire, des 450 années de Juges, rien de plus aisé; de deux choses l'une, ou le nombre appartient à ce qui precede, et se trouve mieux dans le Latin que dans le Grec, et alors il n'y a point de difficulté, il s'agit du partage de la terre, qui vient 450 ans après la promisse; ou il appartient à ce qui suit, et c'est un nombre rond, 450 pour 430; ou enfin en separant le τι Grec, et au lieu de τετρακοσιοις, lisant τριακοσιοις.—*Reflexions Critiques*, &c. vol. ii. p. 199.

† Deus destruet suo tempore opera diaboli, ac eos qui vana persuasione antiquitatis excæcati sunt.—Illa temporum spatia quibus sacrarum Scripturarum fidem exuperant Gentiles, certum quippe esse ea omnia fraude diaboli, per sacerdotes suos ac idolorum ministros fuisse conficta.—*Castigationes ad Scriptum Georgii Hornii*, p. 48.

esteemed of the Fathers; and which, finally, was not superseded, even in part, until the disciples of Jesus began to borrow the light of truth from the followers of Moses, and had learned to value the commentaries of the Rabbis at a higher rate than the testimony of evangelists and martyrs.

In the second chapter of the First Book, *on the religious belief and practices of the ancient Hebrews*, I have found it impossible to avoid altogether the thorny paths of controversy. The question which respects the comparative antiquity of the book of Job is connected by Warburton with a particular doctrine supposed to prevail among the Jews, at the time when it was written, on the mysterious subject of diabolical influence. This great writer imagined that the Israelites knew nothing of what he calls the "History of Satan" before they were carried captive into Assyria; and, assuming this supposed fact as the ground of his hypothesis, he concludes, that, as Satan is actually mentioned in the tract which bears the name of Job, it must have been composed after the return from Babylon.

In opposition to the views of Warburton, I have endeavoured to prove, not only that the Hebrews were well acquainted with the name and offices of Satan long before the conquest of their country by Nebuchadnezzar, but also that the notions concerning the character of the Evil One contained in the book of Job are quite inconsistent with those which the people of God learned in the East, and consequently that the work just mentioned must be older than the Babylonian captivity.

It will be found that, in the earlier periods of their history, the descendants of Jacob believed in the existence of evil spirits as well as of good; but so far from holding, as they did subsequently to the times of Cyrus, that the former were the subjects and agents of a great malevolent demon who had opposed himself to the counsels of the

Most High, they regarded them all, good and bad, as the ministers of Jehovah; accustomed to appear in His presence, to receive His commands, to go forth in order to execute His will, and to take their place again among the sons of God, to render an account of the services which they had performed. The Satan who is introduced into the scene in the book of Job, is clearly not the Evil Principle recognized among the Persians, and adopted in some measure by the Jews of a later age. He appears there as the servant, not as the opposer, of the Divine will; and presents not, in fact, either in his character or in his attributes, any resemblance to that malignant Spirit, whose imaginary history, as one of the Two Principles, filled so large a portion of the theological institutes of Asiatic writers.

There is not, indeed, any ground for questioning the position of Warburton, that the Jews attained to new views of the character of Satan during their abode on the banks of the Euphrates. "This evil Being," says he, "was little known to the Jewish people till about this time."—"On the return from the captivity we find him better known; and things are then ascribed to him, as the immediate and proper author, which were before given in an improper sense to the first and ultimate Cause of all things."* This distinction will not be denied by any one who has traced the history of opinion among the chosen people; but, I repeat, it is on the ground of this very distinction that I oppose the conclusion which the learned writer of the Divine Legation of Moses has attempted to establish, inasmuch as the Satan who appears in the book of Job is not *the immediate and proper author* of the actions which are ascribed to him; being there represented openly and avowedly as the minister or agent of the "ultimate

* Divine Legation, book vi. section 2.

Cause of all things." It is therefore perfectly clear, that the Satan who was employed by Divine Wisdom as the instrument of Job's affliction, belonged to the simple theology of the patriarchal ages, and not to the more complicated mysticism which was taught among the Assyrians and Persians.*

On another point, also, have I found it necessary to dissent from the conclusion of Warburton; the belief, namely, of the ancient Hebrews in the immortality of the soul and of a future state of reward and punishment. This learned and most ingenious author maintained, as is well known, not only that Moses did not teach the doctrines which have just been mentioned; but also that, though he himself was perfectly well acquainted with them, he *purposely* concealed from the whole body of the people under his charge, such lofty speculations and exalted prospects.

That the inspired lawgiver of the Israelites did not communicate to them any knowledge respecting the state after death, or possess their minds with the hopes and fears which necessarily accompany the doctrine of a future life, is a truth so generally admitted by theological writers,

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* The following observations by Calmet, though not altogether unobjectionable, may suggest to the reader some topics for reflexion. "The ancient Jews, before the captivity of Babylon, do not seem to have concerned themselves much in their inquiries about angels; we do not find that they paid to them worship of any sort, true or false, superstitious, or pure. By their own confession, it was not till they went into Chaldea that they learned the names of Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, and that there were seven principal spirits before the throne of God. Nor was their knowledge more perfect with respect to evil spirits; the name *Satan*, which we sometimes meet with, is general, and signifies *an adversary*. Beelzebub is the name of an idol. Isaiah mentions *Lucifer;* but that means only the morning star, and when applied to the devil, it must be only figuratively. Asmodeus seems to be the first proper name of the devil that we meet with in Scripture; and yet there is room to doubt whether this be really a proper name.—*Diction. et Dissertation sur le Demon Asmodée, a la tête de Tobie.*

that I know not one, entitled for his learning and judgment to the smallest notice, who has denied it. To be satisfied, indeed, that this section of Warburton's theory is well-founded, it is only necessary to read the Pentateuch with attention, and, without adding to the information which is therein contained, the lights and inferences which may be derived from other parts of Scripture. But that Moses himself understood the doctrines of immortality and retribution, and yet studiously concealed them from the Hebrew tribes, whom he was appointed to teach as well as to govern, is a proposition to which the mind of a Christian does not readily accede. I have, therefore, attempted to prove, that, although the Jewish legislator, as a disciple of the Egyptian priests, might have cherished the belief that the human soul does not perish at death, but survives, in a certain sense, the dissolution of the body, he might, nevertheless, not have attained to such notions of a future existence as could alone be made the foundation of the important doctrine, revealed by Christianity, that as men sow in this world they shall certainly reap in the next.

That the learned orders among the Egyptians, in the days of Moses, held the tenet of the soul's immortality, is rendered more than probable, not only by their usages respecting the treatment of dead bodies, which had a distinct reference to a future life, but also by the opinions on that subject which prevailed among them at the early period when they were first visited by the Greek philosophers. The oldest writers in Greece record it as an unquestionable tradition, that the Egyptians were the first who taught the imperishable nature of the human spirit. But it is equally clear that the priests of On, and of the other religious schools which flourished in the kingdom of the Pharaohs, joined with the doctrine now stated other speculations which rendered it altogether unfit to be used as a

sanction for the great system of divine and moral legislation, which Moses was commissioned to establish among the peculiar people of Jehovah.

The wise men of Egypt, there is great reason to believe, thought, with their brethren of the remoter East, that the soul of man was doomed to enjoy its highest and most desirable beatitude in its re-union with the Divine Spirit; from which, during its abode upon earth, and in the various forms through which it had to pass, it was painfully and reluctantly separated. The tenet of the metempsychosis was necesssarily engrafted upon the doctrine of absorption; for it soon became manifest that the lives of most men were not sufficiently pure to justify the expectation of an immediate enjoyment of celestial happiness in the bosom of the Most Holy. It appeared necessary that the contaminated soul should undergo a process, which might at once inspire a hatred of sin and wash away its defilements. The purified spirit was at length to return to its original body; the mortal term allotted to which it would then be enabled to spend in loving good and abstaining from evil, and would thus become prepared for its ultimate bliss, as a part of the great soul of the world.

Of these opinions, held almost universally in the East, we find very distinct traces in the ancient Hebrew Scriptures. Belief in the separate state of the soul, a consequence naturally flowing from the tenet of transmigration, is clearly recognized in the narrative of Samuel, and in the pious hymns of David. But, I repeat, the species of immortality which rests upon the metempsychosis was not of that description which could be employed as the basis of a moral law such as Moses was commanded to promulgate; and as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter was not acquainted with any more perfect doctrine respecting the nature of the human soul and its destination hereafter,

he was not permitted by the Lord Jehovah to introduce it as the sanction of his divine legislation.

It appears, therefore, much more reasonable to conclude that Moses himself was ignorant of the proper immortality of the human soul, as that doctrine is taught and received by Christians, than to maintain with Warburton that his knowledge on this important subject was complete, and that, notwithstanding, he used the greatest care to conceal it from the Hebrew people. The bishop represents this chosen servant of God as hurrying over his narrative of the translation of Enoch, lest his readers should derive from it some glimpse of the truth on the real doctrine of a future life. "Moses," says he, "knew and believed the immortality of Enoch, and *purposely obscured the fact* from whence it might have been collected."* Nay, he farther takes credit to himself for proving that the divine legislator, "who *studiously* omitted the mention of a future state of rewards and punishments, was *well apprized* of its importance; and that the PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN FOR THE SINS OF THEIR PARENTS was brought into his institution purposely to afford some advantages to government, which the doctrine of a *future state*, as it is found in all other societies, amply supplies."† The simple reader must have great difficulty in discovering for all these evasions, concealments, and expedients, a reason worthy of the Almighty Sovereign of the universe and of his inspired minister the lawgiver of Israel.

Nor is the only objection which can be urged against the view that I have taken of this obscure subject, possess-

* Divine Legation, book v. section 5, p. 163, and vol. i. p. 301 of this work.

† Divine Legation, book vi. section 6, p. 132. I have here adopted the *italics* and CAPITALS of the original.

ed of any material weight, when examined in connection with the general tenor of Divine Providence in those remote times. I allude to the remark, which must naturally suggest itself to every reader, in respect to the ignorance of Moses on a point so extremely important as the immortality of the human soul, taken as the basis of the still more momentous doctrine of future reward and punishment. It might be maintained that he was thereby entirely disqualified for the great office which he was called to fill; inasmuch as that person must have a very inadequate notion of the character, the duties, and the destination of man, who does not habitually contemplate his existence upon earth, with a reference to his condition hereafter. But this objection, so far as it can be admitted against the principles of a dispensation which was at once special and supernatural, applies with equal force to the whole patriarchal economy; during which the mass of mankind, including the highest and the most enlightened, were allowed to remain in ignorance of those great purposes of Eternal Wisdom which, at a later period, shed abroad a full and steady light on the things of the world to come, and especially on the hopes and final greatness of the better part of the human race. The imperfect knowledge of the son of Amram is, therefore, not inconsistent with the general principles of the Divine government in the time at which he lived.

In the first chapter of the second book, which treats of the ancient history of the Babylonians and Assyrians, I have followed the course suggested by the sacred narrative; and have accordingly given a place to the kingdom of Nimrod prior to that which was founded on the banks of the Tigris by the colonists under Ashur. When examining the arguments which are commonly used for the existence of an independent sovereignty in Western Asia, before the

foundations were laid of the great Assyrian empire, the reader will find considerable satisfaction in the evidence brought forward at great length by Alexander Polyhistor, Africanus, Syncellus, and by the indefatigable Jackson, who has collected and arranged the whole. In regard, indeed, to the succession of three separate dynasties at Babylon, before the conquest of Ninus, there exists only that degree of probability which arises from the concurrence of two ancient authors; who appear, however, to have derived their information from different sources, and who certainly had no interest in disguising or perverting the truth.

But the main controversy respects the existence and antiquity of the Assyrian empire itself; for while some writers carry it back fifteen centuries before Christ, others fix its commencement at twelve hundred, and even at eight hundred years, prior to the same era. The views of Newton, on this head, are generally acknowledged to be untenable. Were we indeed to draw any inference relative to other nations from the mere silence of Jewish history before the establishment of the regal government, we should form very incorrect conclusions in regard to the condition of the ancient world at large. Egypt, though nearest to Palestine of all the great kingdoms, is not once named in the Hebrew annals during the long period of six hundred years. The same reserve is maintained respecting the empire of Assyria. After the brief narrative in the first of the Mosaical books which points to its origin, and the prediction of Balaam which alludes to its rising power, the sacred historian takes no farther notice of the monarchy of Ninus, until the arms of Pul, of Tiglathpileser, and of Shalmaneser were directed by Divine Providence to punish the increasing depravity of the houses of Israel and Judah. But, as it would be unreasonable to maintain that the

kingdom of Egypt did not exist, because no mention is made of it in the Bible from the days of Moses to those of Solomon, no reflecting person will allow much weight to the arguments of those archæologists, who insist that Assyria could not have risen into a powerful state before the age of Menahem and Hoshea, else its existence and its exploits must have been recorded in the inspired books of the Hebrews.

An expression in Herodotus, of which the precise import has never been fully understood, has led several modern chronologers to date the commencement of the Assyrian empire about 1230 years before the advent of our Saviour. The Halicarnassian historian remarks, that, prior to the revolt of the Medes under Arbaces, the Assyrians had governed Upper Asia five hundred and twenty years. Assuming that this insurrection took place in the year B. C. 710, the writers, to whom I have alluded, very properly conclude, that the Assyrian power must have extended itself over the particular division of Asia described by the father of history, about the twelve hundred-and-thirtieth year before the introduction of Christianity.

But the words of Herodotus do not by any means authorise the conclusion which has been drawn from them by those who assert, that, at the epoch now specified, the first foundations of the Assyrian empire were laid; and consequently that its government in Upper Asia was coeval with the earliest exercise of its power. Besides, it is much more probable that the revolt of Arbaces, as it is usually called, occurred about eight hundred and twenty years before Christ than at any later period; whence it is manifest that the epoch fixed upon by Dr Gillies for the beginning and by Dr Hales for the revival of the Assyrian monarchy, is not supported by a suitable basis of histori-

cal evidence. It is clear, moreover, that all the objections to the common hypothesis, which places the reign of Ninus in the days of the patriarch Abraham, may be brought to bear with equal force against the supposition that the first Assyrian king began to rule in the middle of the thirteenth century before the Christian faith; because no one can deny, that, in the Bible, the only contemporaneous history which has come down to us, there is the same silence preserved respecting the great Asiatic monarchy at the particular period when it is here imagined to have started into being, which prevailed concerning it during the three preceding centuries. In fact, viewing the subject on general principles, there is no greater improbability that the Assyrian empire should have begun in the time of Abraham than in the days of the Hebrew Judges; for, in both cases, it must be acknowledged, that its rise and progress are equally unnoticed by the compilers of the more ancient portion of the Jewish Scriptures.

In connection with this subject, I have attempted to shew that the existence of a great empire in Western Asia was not incompatible with the comparative independence of the several states, hordes, or clans, of which it was composed. The history of Eastern nations, ancient as well as modern, affords a continued proof and illustration of this statement. We ought not, therefore, hastily to refuse our belief to a narrative occupied with oriental affairs, solely because it does not, in every minute particular, correspond to the ideas which we have derived from European policy.

But I have to crave the special attention of the reader to the views which I have been induced to adopt, not so much with regard to the antiquity of the Assyrian empire, as to the events which diversified its annals during the last three hundred years of its existence; for, if the conclusions which I have stated shall be found to rest upon a

proper degree of historical testimony, the intricacies and contradictions which have hitherto impeded the path of Asiatic chronology will be in a great measure removed.

Agreeably, then, to the catalogue of Assyrian kings given by Ctesias, an interruption took place in the reigning dynasty about the year B. C. 821; when Arbaces, the governor of Media, wrested the imperial sceptre from the hands of Thonos Concoleros, and mounted the throne in his stead. Whether this rebellious satrap was a Mede by birth, or only so called from his official connection with the country which he governed, is a point which has not been ascertained, and is, perhaps, not worthy of any very minute inquiry: certain it is, however, that the race of kings which succeeded him has been distinguished by a reference to their supposed Median extraction. But the main error into which chronologers and historians have fallen, arises from the very groundless opinion that the *kingdom of the Medes* assumed its origin at the period when Arbaces established himself as the sovereign of Nineveh. Hence has been produced in the Assyrian annals a degree of confusion and positive inconsistency, which nothing short of the most violent expedients has hitherto been able to remove.

For example, it is admitted that, in consequence of the revolt of the Medes, and the creation on their part of an independent sovereignty, the power of the Assyrian kings was very much diminished; and yet we find in Scripture that it was immediately after the very period at which their strength is supposed to have been so much impaired, that the princes of Nineveh overran Syria and Palestine, subdued the Israelites, and even extended their conquests to the borders of Egypt. Nay, what is still more perplexing to those who follow the common hypothesis, it is related by the sacred historian, that the captives who were

carried away from Samaria and the adjoining countries, were placed by their Assyrian conquerors in Halah and in Habor, and in the *cities of the Medes*,—a fact which supplies the most indisputable proof that Shalmaneser was the ruler not only of the kingdoms of Nineveh and Babylon, but likewise of Media; the province in which the enemies of his throne are described as having already formed a rival and hostile monarchy.

To rid his system of this gross inconsistency, Jackson, in direct opposition to Ctesias, and without the slightest shadow of authority from any other ancient writer, removes the whole catalogue of Assyrian kings a hundred and eleven years downwards; and thereby places Arbaces in the year B. C. 710, when the revolt of the Medes actually came to pass, instead of his true era B. C. 821, when he raised himself from the rank of a provincial governor to that of paramount sovereign. Need I remark, that, where such liberties are used with established records, no confidence can be reposed in the reasoning of the most industrious writer? Had it occurred to the able author of the Chronological Antiquities to mark the distinction between the simple *change of dynasty* in the person of Arbaces, and the *revolt* which, more than a hundred years afterwards, secured to Dejoces the crown of Media, all the difficulties connected with this subject would have disappeared. No fact in ancient history is more certain than that the Assyrian empire was not dissolved at the time when Arbaces lifted his hand against his master, or seized upon his empty seat. The occasion and circumstances of his accession are, indeed, wrapped up in such profound obscurity, that it is impossible to determine whether he owed his rise to military violence, or to the contempt and execration which drove Thonos from his kingdom. But the devoted Israelites and the voluptuous Syrians were made to feel that no

weakness in the Assyrian arm followed the elevation of Arbaces; for he and his immediate successors, under names which are better known to the Hebrew than to the Greek language, extended the terror of their power from the river to the great sea, and from the southern wilderness to the mountains of the north.

The diligent reader of Assyrian antiquities will find that the empire founded by Ninus, so far from falling in pieces under the pressure of revolt in the time of Arbaces, continued, even after the Medes had erected a separate kingdom, to exhibit tokens of undiminished strength and authority. It is even extremely doubtful, as I have elsewhere remarked, whether the supposed independence of Media under Dejoces and his successors was ever recognized by the court of Nineveh. This king is said indeed to have made conquests, and to have extended far into the north the power and reputation of his arms. But we find, notwithstanding, that Phraortes, to whom he bequeathed the sceptre, was checked in his very first attempt on the Assyrian provinces, and ultimately defeated and slain by Nabuchadonosor, the warlike monarch of that country. In the seventeenth year of his reign, the Assyrian took the field at the head of a formidable army, by which he defeated the Median forces at Ragau, a city in their own territories; made Phraortes prisoner, and put him to death the same day as a rebel; stormed Ecbatana, his capital, which, it is said, he had strongly fortified; demolished its tower, and spoiled its palaces; and afterwards returned to Nineveh, where he feasted his victorious troops a hundred and twenty days.

To conclude, therefore, with the greater number of antiquaries, that the Median power obtained an ascendency over the Assyrian at the time when Arbaces, a Mede by birth or office, mounted the throne of Thonos Concoleros,

is not only in itself a groundless assumption, but directly contrary to the best-established facts of contemporaneous history. In truth, upon a minute and candid examination of ancient records, it must, I think, be acknowledged, that, except in the pages of Herodotus, there is no evidence for an independent sovereignty in Media, until after the success of Cyaxares and his allies before the walls of Nineveh. That there were kings, or governors with regal power, both at Ecbatana and at Babylon, before the rod of the Assyrians was broken in the days of Sarac, will be readily granted by every one who is in the least degree conversant with ancient history; but that these kings were strictly independent, that they owed no allegiance to the paramount authority at Nineveh, is extremely improbable. As to the Babylonians, indeed, it is acknowledged that, if we except a short period of insurrection about the end of the eighth century before our era, they were vassals and tributaries to the Assyrians down to the last moment of the imperial government: and that the Medes owned a similar subordination to the ancient empire on the Tigris, will, I am certain, appear more probable in proportion as the testimony of the old writers, both sacred and profane, is carefully examined.

It was not, as I have already observed, till Cyaxares, about six hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ, took Nineveh, when the *imperial* power passed into the hands of the Medes, that this people became really sovereign and independent. During sixty years or thereby they continued at the head of the Assyrian empire; and hence the last two kings of Media and the last two monarchs of Assyria were necessarily the same individuals. About the middle of the sixth century before the Christian era, the rising fortunes of Persia eclipsed those of Media, and the subjects of the latter state were soon compelled to receive in the

person of Cyrus a conqueror and a master. From that period the nature as well as the seat of government was permanently changed; and thenceforth, accordingly, no such traces remained of the empire founded by Ninus as could justify any attempt to extend its annals to a later age, or to identify it with the more brilliant but shorter dominion of the Medes and Persians.

The views which I am now endeavouring to recommend, in regard to ancient history, remove all the difficulties which encumber the hypothesis of *two Assyrian empires*; one of which is supposed to have been erected upon the ruins of the other. This absurd conjecture took its rise from the necessity of rendering the annals of that powerful monarchy consistent with the inspired records of the Jews; it being found that the very period at which the common systems of chronology fix the dissolution of the Assyrian empire, synchronized with the remarkable epoch when its arms were employed in the subjugation of all the countries westward of the great desert. In truth, it is somewhat amusing to observe, that the time which Larcher mentions as the precise era when Assyria lost her power, and ceased for ever to act the first part among the nations of the East, is the very time that Marsham, Newton, Jameson, and their followers, have selected for the beginning of her strength; the commencement of that splendid career of glory and conquest which she pursued from the Mediterranean to the banks of the Indus!

When this subject shall be studied under an improved light, derived solely from a comparison of ancient authors, and without any bias in favour of particular systems of chronology, it will, I venture to predict, no longer remain doubtful that the change which took place at Nineveh, when Arbaces ascended the throne, was not manifested in division and weakness, as has been commonly ima-

gined, but rather in that vigour and ambition which usually inspire the measures of a great country, when an able sovereign succeeds a dynasty of weak, effeminate, and voluptuous princes. But whatever may be the degree of confidence which the reader shall think proper to place in the deductions relative to the Assyrian empire, which have arisen from the principles that I have endeavoured to establish, it will not be lessened when he reflects, that the argument has all along proceeded on a uniform principle, and without using any liberties with those ancient records whence the chronological facts have been derived. I have carefully avoided the practice of that bold criticism which bends to its own objects the clearest statements of the authors whose works it examines; holding it as a first principle, that the testimony of an ancient writer must be received in its literal meaning, and, with the exception of manifest corruptions and typographical errors, either adopted in whole or rejected in whole. For this reason, I could not follow the example of the learned and zealous Jackson, who, as I have already mentioned, in order to accommodate the statement of Ctesias to his own hypothesis, altered the dates throughout the whole Assyrian catalogue by not less than a hundred and eleven years. Hales, again, adopts the last twelve kings as given in the record of the Grecian antiquary, while he rejects the remaining twenty-four. But it must be perfectly clear that the whole list, which we believe to have been copied from the Persian archives, depends upon the very same authority; and consequently that, if the first two-thirds of the succession be fictitious, the last third must be equally destitute of every claim to credit. Finding, in Ctesias, the most satisfactory marks of truth and good information, I have trodden in his steps from Ninus down to Astyages, a period of 1572 years; that is, from B. C.

2126 to B. C. 554. The slight difference of one year might, perhaps, have been avoided; but in reckoning backward from the accession of Cyrus as king of Media to the beginning of Ninus, the founder of the proper Assyrian monarchy, the result came out exactly as I have given it at the 118th page of the second volume.

In the third chapter of the second book, I have presented an outline of the ancient history of Persia, composed of the best and most authentic materials that industry and an increasing knowledge of the literature of the East have, in these latter days, enabled our countrymen, resident in that part of the world, to collect and arrange. That it is not at once more full and more satisfactory, must be attributed to the absence, in the most important branches of archæology, of those standard writings and national records, which, in the case of the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans, have served to constitute an imperishable memorial of their genius, their manners, their religion, their civil institutions, as well as of the more striking events which marked the progress of society in their respective countries. The reader will find an extract from the Dabistan, that singular work, the discovery of which was hailed by Sir William Jones as a rich source of oriental learning; "which," says he, "has at once dissipated the cloud and cast a gleam of light on the primeval history of Iran and of the human race, of which I had long despaired, and which could hardly have dawned from any other quarter." That the sanguine expectations of the great scholar, whose words I have just quoted, were not realized upon a closer examination of the labours of Mohsin Fani, is but too well known to the student of Persian antiquities; but as the tract itself is rare, and has never yet been fully translated into any European tongue, I have extracted as much of

the first book as will supply to the reader the means of forming a judgment in regard to the whole.*

It has often been suspected that the sages of the remoter countries of Asia have not disdained to profit by the ingenuity of the Greeks, and of those other nations of the West from whom the Greeks derived their knowledge of letters and of the arts, and to the extension of whose science and learning they supplied a convenient channel in their elegant and expressive language. A jealous European might find in the Dabistan some grounds on which to support a charge of plagiarism against the Hindu philosophers. The resemblance which may be traced in their opinions, to the geological speculations of Thales, as well as to the idealism and sceptical tenets of other Western schools, betrays, it might be thought, an acquaintance with the scientific writings of Greece. But such doctrines, perhaps, are the natural fruit of retirement and contemplation in all parts of the world; and as the people of Babylon, Persia, and India were civilized at an earlier period than the inhabitants of the most favoured countries of Europe, it is more probable that the Greeks, through the Egyptians, borrowed from them, than that the former should have been indebted to the latter for new views and subtile thoughts.

There is no longer any ground to hope that materials for a history of ancient Iran may be discovered in the works of her native authors. The earliest of Persian annalists, it is well known, are later than the Mahommedan conquest; and, therefore, they have nothing to commu-

* A part of the first book of the Dabistan was translated by Mr Gladwin, and published in a periodical work circulated at Calcutta; but I am indebted for the version which I have used to the learned gentleman whose name is mentioned in the last paragraph of the Preface.

nicate respecting the times with which we are most desirous to be acquainted, more probable than the dreams of Geoffrey of Monmouth, or the fables of William of Malmsbury. The fanatical rage of the Arabian conquerors urged them to destroy all the monuments of Persian independence, and thereby to contract the era of history to the rise of their own superstition. Hence we are indebted to that wonderful people the Greeks for every thing valuable which has come down to us concerning the ancient inhabitants and manners of Western Asia. No degree of diligence, it is to be feared, will ever confer upon the inquisitive learning of modern times, any record older than Herodotus, or even an extract from archives more satisfactory than those which were copied by Ctesias. The Dabistan, at all events, has not answered the expectations of those who first announced it to the literary world. Its details are, upon the whole, not less trifling than they appear to be fabulous and superstitious; while its age and authority, even on the most favourable construction, must continue to be extremely questionable.

But it is not to be concluded, from this statement, that the inquiries of European scholars in the East have been altogether fruitless, in regard to the ancient history of the countries to which their investigations have been directed. In many instances, their labours have been recompensed with some very gratifying discoveries. They have found relics of idolatry and forms of adoration, which, as they have no affinity to the religious system at present established, necessarily connect themselves with the superstitions of older times, and with different principles of theological belief. Even the literature of modern Persia presents, in its allusions to the primeval habits of her people, unequivocal tokens of a power and greatness which later events have eclipsed. But it is true, notwithstanding,

that, if the works of the Grecian historians had been lost, we should have found ourselves placed in a state of almost total ignorance respecting the affairs of ancient Persia.

From the narrative of Herodotus, and particularly from a passage wherein he mentions that the governor of Persia sent a body of troops, under the command of his son Memnon, to assist the Trojans during the famous siege of their town by the Greeks, it is manifest that the great empire, which at the period in question comprehended the Iranian provinces, stretched its protecting power even to the shores of the Ægean sea. The Persians, says the historian of Halicarnassus, regarded all the barbarous nations of Asia, that is, all who were not of Grecian extraction, as of the same lineage with themselves, and therefore entitled to their aid: and Diodorus adds, that the king of Troy, being a vassal of the Assyrian monarch, sent messengers to Teutamus, who at that time held the imperial sceptre, soliciting his assistance against the confederated host of Agamemnon. These facts are sufficient to identify to a certain extent the ancient history of Persia with that of Assyria; and thereby to console us in some measure for the loss of those records and other literary monuments, for the careful preservation of which, the Persian princes were celebrated even in the earliest ages.

In respect to the chronology of Greece, on which the powerful mind and great authority of Newton have thrown so much obscurity, I have followed the beaten path; happy to find that the oldest opinions on this interesting subject are the best confirmed. As the Argonautic expedition, the destruction of Troy, and the return of the Heraclidæ to the Peloponnesus, are the most important epochs in ancient Grecian history, I have devoted to them a separate chapter; and have, I trust, illustrated the arguments commonly adduced in support of the dates on which I

have fixed, in such a manner as to place the conclusions of our established chronologists on clearer if not on stronger ground. To aid the inquiries of the studious reader, I have inserted a copy of the famous Parian Chronicle, together with the corrections suggested by Selden and recommended by Dr Hales; adding from both these authors a brief account of the Arundel Marbles, which have been in the possession of England about two hundred years.

But, notwithstanding all the learned labour which has been bestowed on these subjects by the chronographers and antiquaries of the two last ages, no one ought to expect in their works conclusions which cannot be questioned, or results which will give satisfaction in every point of view. It has been a fault on the part of authors, as well as of their readers, to look for absolute truth and certainty where these are not to be found. In the annals of nations which, compared with Assyria and Egypt, are but of yesterday, no small difficulty is encountered when we undertake to determine the particular year or month in which any remarkable event took place; how much more difficult then must it be to fix the precise epoch of occurrences, many of which were not embodied in contemporary records, but committed for a time to the current of tradition, and afterwards distributed over the surface of history, upon a general reference to some leading fact,—the reign of a king or the conquest of a province!

In all similar inquiries, therefore, we must rest satisfied with an approximation to chronological accuracy; abstaining from every attempt to harmonize the dates of ancient times by tampering with any document which does not bear the strongest marks of vitiation, or by altering the plain import of a narrative solely because it militates with a favourite system. The author who cuts down facts to make them quadrate with an hypothesis, so far from promoting

the interests of chronology, or securing the confidence of his reader, creates insuperable obstacles to the attainment of both these desirable objects. He not only loses his own labour, but adds greatly to that of those who may have the bad fortune to succeed him in the same department of study.

On the subjects alluded to in the latter part of this Introduction, as well as in the three last chapters of the second volume, the reader will derive much information from the following works:—

Malcolm's History of Greece.
Origines, by Sir William Drummond.
Works of Sir William Jones.
Bryant's Analysis of Ancient Mythology.
Astle on the Origin and Progress of Writing.
Pinkerton's Essay on the Goths.
Jamieson's Hermes Scythicus.
Faber on Pagan Idolatry.
Cirbied. Recherches Curieuses sur l'Hist. Ancienne de l'Asie.
D'Ohsson. Tableau Historique de l'Orient.
Selden on the Parian Chronicle.
Prideaux on the same subject.
Robertson's Dissertation on the Parian Chronicle.
Hewlett on the Authenticity of the Parian Chronicle.
Fourmont. Reflexions sur l'Origines des Anciens Peuples.
Diodorus Siculus. Herodotus. Strabo. Æschylus.
Richardson's Dissertations.
Lord Monboddo on the Origin and Progress of Language.
Musgrave on Grecian Mythology, and Chronology of Olympiads.
Bochart's Sacred Geography.
Chronology of Usher, Marsham, Newton, Jackson, and Hales.
Gillies' and Mitford's Histories of Greece.
Hesiod. Opera et Dies.
Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres.
Clement. Alexand. Opera.
Euseb. Thesaurus Temporum et Præpar. Evangel.
Thucydid. De Bello Peloponneso.
Rich's Memoir on Babylon.

PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION,

CONTAINING

REMARKS ON ANCIENT CHRONOLOGY.

BEFORE we proceed to review the annals of the ancient Hebrews as connected with those of contemporary nations, it will be necessary to establish, on a sound basis, the chronological system which is to regulate the train of our narrative. Dr Shuckford, it is well known, followed, in his laborious work, the chronology of the modern Hebrew text, in preference to that which is found in the Antiquities of Josephus, and in the Septuagint translation of the Mosaical writings. He rejected the more extended scheme of the latter authorities, as being, in his opinion, not only inconsistent with the dates to which we are accustomed in the common version of the English Bible; but also objectionable on account of certain supposed discrepancies in its numerical statements, even as these respect the order and succession of some of the principal events which occupy the pages of the Old Testament history.

But, since the days of Dr Shuckford, much light has been thrown upon the intricate subject of scriptural chronology, by the labours of several distinguished writers, and, particularly, of Hayes, Jackson, and Hales; and hence

has arisen an increased degree of confidence in that larger numeration, which is supported by the Seventy interpreters, by Demetrius, by Eupolemus, and by the celebrated Jewish annalist whose name has been already mentioned. Indeed, the facts and reasonings adduced by these able authors, have left no room for doubt that the chronology of the Septuagint, confirmed as it is by the statements of so many ancient historians, as well as by the venerable records of the Samaritan Pentateuch, ought to be our guide in tracing the narrative of the sacred penmen. I shall therefore proceed to give such an outline of the enlarged and comprehensive system now alluded to, as will prove, it is hoped, no unsuitable introduction to the history of the Hebrew commonwealth.

In the *first* place, then, I shall illustrate the fact, that there is, and has long been, a great difference between the chronology of the modern Hebrew Scriptures, and the system of dates which determine the order of the corresponding events, as recorded in the Samaritan Pentateuch, in the Septuagint version, and in the works of Josephus.

Secondly, I shall show that this difference did not always exist, but that it must have been occasioned by an alteration which appears to have been introduced into the Jewish registers, between the period at which the translation of the Seventy was first made public, and the middle of the second century of the Christian era.

And, in the *third* place, I shall bring forward satisfactory reasons in support of the opinion now generally maintained by writers on this subject, that the difference in question was not accidental, and such as might have originated in the ignorance or carelessness of transcribers; but that it must have been regularly planned and effected by persons, who imagined that they had an important object to serve by adopting such disingenuous conduct.

Under the last of these heads, it will be proved that the chronology of the Hebrew Scriptures and that of the Greek version were originally the same; and moreover, that the accuracy of the latter was not called in question by the Jews for nearly four hundred years; that is, until the rapid progress of Christianity awakened the enmity of certain unprincipled individuals among that people, and induced them to alter the dates of their ancient chronicles, in order to weaken the arguments derived from them in support of the new religion.*

Section I.

For the sake of conveniency, the chronological inquiries which respect the Old Testament are usually divided into certain ages or epochs, as follows, viz.

From the creation to the deluge;
From the deluge to the birth of Abraham;
From the birth of Abraham to the exode of the Israelites;
From the exode to the building of Solomon's temple;
From the building of the temple to the destruction of the same;
From the destruction of the temple to the restoration of the Jews;
And, lastly, from that event to the Christian era.

In the first of the above periods, a very great discrepancy is found to prevail between the numeration of the modern Hebrew text and that of the Septuagint and Jo-

* See a "Dissertation on the Chronology of the Septuagint," by C. Hayes, Esq.; "Chronological Antiquities," by John Jackson; and "A New Analysis of Chronology," by the Rev. W. Hales, D. D.

sephus. The amount of the difference between these ancient authorities, as well as the singular variation which appears in the Samaritan Pentateuch, will be clearly understood from inspecting the following table:

TABLE I.

SHEWING THE NUMBERS OF YEARS FROM THE CREATION TO THE DELUGE.

	Lived before Birth of eldest Son.				After the Birth of eldest Son.				Total Length of Life.			
	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.	Jos.	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.	Jos.	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.	Jos.
Adam,	130	130	230	230	800	800	700	700	930	930	930	930
Seth,	105	105	205	205	807	807	707	707	912	912	912	912
Enos,	90	90	190	190	815	815	715	715	905	905	905	905
Cainan,	70	70	170	170	840	840	740	740	910	910	910	910
Malaleel,	65	65	165	165	830	830	730	730	895	895	895	895
Jared,	162	62	162	162	800	785	800	800	962	847	962	962
Enoch,	65	65	165	165	300	300	200	200	365	365	365	365
Methuselah,	187	67	187	187	782	653	782	782	969	720	969	969
Lamech,	182	53	188	182	595	600	595	595	777	653	753	777
Noah at the flood,	600	600	600	600								
To the flood,	1656	1307	2262	2256								

Thus, from the creation to the deluge, the number of years, according to the

Hebrew text, is, - - - - 1656
Samaritan Pentateuch, - - - 1307
Septuagint version, - - - 2262
Josephus, - - - - - 2256

It will be observed, that between Josephus and the Septuagint the difference is only six years; while both of these differ from the modern Hebrew Bible not less than six hundred. The cause of this remarkable variation, or rather perhaps the manner in which it was effected, may be discovered in the principle according to which the Jews constructed their chronological tables. They measured the several eras of their ancient history, not by adding together the full lives of their successive patriarchs, but by taking the sum of their *generations;* that is, the age to which they had respectively attained at the birth of their eldest sons. For example, the generation of Enos, or his age at the birth of Cainan, is estimated by the Hebrew and Samaritan texts as having extended to 90 years; the residue of his life, according to the same authorities, is 815 years; and the total length of life, being the amount of both these sums, is 905 years: whereas, in the Septuagint and Josephus, the generation is enlarged to 190 years; the residue of life is diminished to 715 years; while the full length of life, or 905 years, is, of course, the same in all these ancient records. Hence we perceive, that, in order to lengthen or shorten any particular era, it was only necessary to alter, in a certain number of instances, the proportion between the generation and the residue of life; and we shall find, in fact, that such was the method actually adopted by those Jews who, in the first, or beginning of the second century of our Faith, took upon themselves the dishonest task of remodelling their chronological tables.

TABLE II.

FROM THE DELUGE TO THE BIRTH OF ABRAHAM.

	Lived before Birth of eldest Son.				After Birth of eldest Son.			Total Length of Life.		
	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.	Jos.	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.
Shem, 2 years after flood, begat	2	2	2	2	500	500	500	600	600	600
Arphaxad,	35	135	135	135	403	303	403	438	438	538
Cainan,			130				330			
Salah,	30	130	130	130	403	303	303	433	433	433
Eber,	34	134	134	134	430	270	270	464	404	404
Peleg or Phaleg	30	130	130	130	209	109	209	239	239	339
Reu or Ragau,	32	132	132	130	207	107	207	239	239	339
Serug,	30	130	130	132	200	100	200	230	230	330
Nahor,	29	79	79	120	119	69	129	148	148	208
Terah,	70	70	70	70	135	75	135	205	145	205
From flood to Abraham,	292	942	1072	993						

It thus appears, that from the deluge to the birth of Abraham, the number of years, according to the

Hebrew text, is, - - - - 292
Samaritan Pentateuch, - - - 942
Septuagint version, - - - - 1072
Josephus, - - - - 993

It is evident, from a mere inspection of the above table, that the period which intervened between the flood and the birth of Abraham has been diminished in the modern Hebrew Bible, upon the same principle by which we were enabled to explain the striking difference that presents itself in

the antediluvian chronology. The *generations* in the lives of seven patriarchs have been shortened to the extent of a hundred years in each; which years are, in every case, added to the remainder of their lives, so as to make the gross amount correspond very nearly with the numbers of Josephus and of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

The insertion in the Septuagint, between the names of Arphaxad and Salah, of a second Cainan, to whose generation 130 years have been allotted, has occasioned to chronologists a great deal of trouble, and thrown not a little obscurity over a very interesting portion of the patriarchal times. It would prove inconsistent with the particular object now before us, to enter into the arguments which have been employed by several authors of considerable name, with the view of establishing the existence of this son of Arphaxad; and as an outline of the principal facts and reasonings, which have been adduced on the affirmative side of the question, will be given in a subsequent part of this dissertation, I shall rest satisfied, at present, with a simple reference to the learned and useful works mentioned below.*

As the period from Abraham to the exode has escaped the darkness and perplexity which have fallen upon the larger portion of ancient Jewish history, we pass on at once to that more intricate section of Hebrew chronology which begins with the deliverance from Egypt, and ends with the foundation of Solomon's temple. It will be sufficient for the object now in view, to state in general terms the amount of the difference between the numeration of the Hebrew text and that of Josephus, together with the computations of some of the more distinguished authors who

* Chron. Antiq. vol. i. p. 66. New Analyis of An. Chron. Dissertation on the Chronology of the Septuagint.

have written on this subject, whether in ancient or more modern times.

In the first book of the Kings, chapter vi. verse 1st, it is said, "And it came to pass, in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord." But in the volumes of Josephus we find two different dates for the commencement of this pious undertaking on the part of the son of David, neither of which agrees with that given by the inspired historian. For example, on the ground of certain statements contained in the tenth book of the Jewish Antiquities, the foundation of the temple is computed to have been laid in the five hundred and ninety-second year after the departure from Egypt; while, from other notices which are preserved in the ninth, as also in the twentieth book of the same work, it has been inferred that the interval between the exode and the building of the house of God at Jerusalem could not be less than six hundred and twelve years. But, without entering at present into the minuter investigations which this subject will hereafter demand, we may assert with confidence, that the number in the sixth chapter of the first book of Kings is inaccurate, and that it even bears indubitable marks of being a recent vitiation of the sacred text. Meantime, that the reader may be enabled to form a judgment of the extent of the discrepancy which prevails among the most learned chronologers, in regard to this portion of the inspired narrative, he is supplied, in the following table, with the simple result of their inquiries, as derived from their respective writings.

TABLE III.

EXHIBITING THE NUMBER OF YEARS FROM THE EXODE TO THE FOUNDATION OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE, ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING AUTHORS.

	Years.		Years.
Julius Africanus, -	741	Vossius, - - -	591
Syncellus, - - -	659	Perizonius, - - -	580
Paschal Chronicle, - -	632	Jackson, - - -	579
Hales, - - -	621	Clemens Alexandrinus, -	573
Josephus, Antiq. books ix. xx.	612	Playfair, - - -	540
Theophilus of Antioch, -	612	Hebrew text, - -	480
Eusebius (Præp. Evan.)	600	Marsham and Houbigant, -	480
Josephus, Antiq. book x.	592		

In respect to the period which elapsed between the erection of the temple and the Christian era there is little difference of opinion among chronologists. According to the authorised English translation of the Bible, the number of years between the two points now mentioned is 1014. Jackson and Playfair agree in adopting nearly the same computation; and I am satisfied that the discrepancy which appears in the work of Dr Hales, who maintains that the period alluded to was not less than 1027 years, may be removed, as I shall afterwards show, by adverting to the distinction between current and complete years, as well as to some other particulars connected with the method followed by the Jews in calculating the reigns of their kings.

Before we leave this section I shall present an outline, extracted from the works of some celebrated writers on chronology, of the results to which their investigations have carried them, in regard to the epoch of the creation, as measured by its distance from the Christian era.

		B. C.
Indian chronology, as computed by	M. Gentil,	6174
Babylonian, - -	Bailly,	6158
Chinese, - - -	Do.	6157

		B.C.
Diogenes Laertius,	Playfair,	6138
Egyptian chronology,	Bailly,	6128
Diodorus Siculus,	Playfair,	6081
Pezron,		5972
Clemens Alexandrinus,		5624
Isaac Vossius,		5590
Septuagint,	Abulfaragius,	5586
Josephus, according to Playfair,		5555
Theophilus of Antioch,		5515
Septuagint, Alexandrian,		5508
Persian chronology,	Bailly,	5507
Julius Africanus,		5500
Chronicle of Axum, Abyssinia,	Bruce,	5000
Demetrius,		5447
Eupolemus,		5446
Jackson,		5426
Hales,		5411
Eusebius,		5200
Philo Judæus,		5196
Arabian chronology,	Playfair,	5185
Epiphanius,		5049
Origen,		4830
Fresnoy,		4700
Playfair,		4008
Kennedy, Usher,		4007
Calmet, Blair,		4004
Capellus,		4000
Dion. Petavius,		3984
Joseph Scaliger,		3950
Rabbi Levi,		3780
Rabbi David Ganz,		3761

	B. C.
Jewish writers in Seder Olam, - -	3758
Rabbi Jason Nosen, - - - -	3734
Rabbi Lipman, - - - - -	3616

It is no part of our present purpose to explain the grounds of the striking variations which show themselves in the above table. It will be sufficient to state the separate numbers which compose this lengthened chronological epoch, as given respectively by Usher, Playfair, Jackson, and Hales :

Usher.	Years.
From creation to deluge, -	1656
— deluge to birth of Abraham,	292
— birth to his leaving Haran,	134
— that event to the exode, -	430
— exode to foundation of temple, - - -	479
— temple to Christian era, -	1013
	4004

Playfair.	Years.
From creation to deluge, -	1656
— deluge to birth of Abraham,	292
— birth to leaving Haran, -	75
— that event to the exode, -	430
— exode to foundation of temple, - - -	540
— temple to Christian era, -	1014
	4007

Jackson.	Years.
From creation to deluge, -	2256
— deluge to birth of Abraham,	1072
— birth to leaving Haran, -	75
— that event to the exode, -	430
— exode to foundation of temple, - - -	579
— temple to Christian era, -	1014
	5426

Hales.	Years.
From creation to deluge, -	2256
— deluge to birth of Abraham,	1002
— birth to leaving Haran,	75
— that event to the exode, -	430
— exode to foundation of temple, - - -	621
— temple to Christian era, -	1027
	5411

It is well known, that the chronology of the English Bible was regulated by the views of Usher, although that learned writer, in opposition to the plain narrative of Scripture, dates the departure of Abraham from Haran in the 135th, instead of the 75th, year of his age; an innovation on the sacred text which cannot be maintained, unless we either admit, on the authority of the Samaritan Pentateuch, that Terah died at 145, and not at 205, as we are told in

the thirty-second verse of the eleventh chapter of Genesis, or yield to the hypothesis, framed by the author just named, that Abraham was the youngest of his father's sons, and was not born till the latter was in his 130th year. Jackson and Hales, on the other hand, follow the authority of the Septuagint and of Josephus; maintaining that the modern Hebrew text has been greatly vitiated in the whole department of chronology, and more especially in the genealogical tables which respect the antediluvian patriarchs, as well as the ten generations immediately after the flood. The computation of Jackson places the creation B.C. 5426, while that of the modern Hebrew, for the same era, is 4004

Difference,	1422

According to Hales the world was created	B.C. 5411
According to the modern Hebrew Bible, as before,	4004
Difference,	1407

I shall now proceed to show that this difference between the Septuagint and the Hebrew text did not always exist; that it was unknown during the period which elapsed from the date of that translation to the Christian era; that it was not suspected in the time of our Saviour and of his apostles, nor even at the beginning of the second century; and that it was not till a date considerably later, that those numerical variations between the original and the Greek version began to be detected by biblical scholars.

Section II.

First, then, on general grounds, it is to be presumed that, in all cases, the version shall agree with the original

in regard at least to the important matters of fact and date; and that in every instance where there is no deficiency, on the part of the translators, in point of knowledge or of fidelity, the former shall present a correct view of the events recorded in the latter; embodying all the circumstances of time, place, and persons, with which the narrative was at first accompanied. The nicer shades of distinction which belong to the idioms of language may, indeed, be lost in the process of translation from one tongue to another; vigour of conception, as well as propriety and beauty, in the delineation of thought may escape amid the mechanical efforts of a mere linguist to find out suitable terms and corresponding phrases; but there is not, within the ordinary range of casualties incident to this species of literary labour, any reason to apprehend an inaccurate version of such palpable things as numerical lists, genealogies, and records. The security afforded by these considerations, which apply to all such undertakings, is greatly increased, when viewed in reference to the particular case now before us, by the importance and sanctity which attached to the very nature of the work; and whether we owe the Septuagint to the munificence and literary curiosity of an Egyptian prince, or, as is more probable, to the private zeal of the Alexandrian Jews, there can be no doubt that the work came forth from the hands of the translators, possessed of all the precision, as to fact and language, which learning, animated by religious and national feeling, could confer on the sacred volume.

But we are not left to mere inference and conjecture on this interesting subject. Philo Judæus, who wrote in the age of the apostles, assures us, that the Greek version was made with such care and exactness, that there was not the least variation in it from the holy original, by addition, omission, or otherwise. He asserts, that the Hebrews who

knew the Greek language, and the Greeks who understood the Hebrew, were so struck with admiration at the entire agreement between the original and the translation, that they not only adored them as sisters, but as one and the same both in words and things: styling the translators not only accurate scholars, but inspired interpreters and prophets, who, with a singular purity of spirit, had entered into the very sentiments of Moses.*

Josephus supplies us with similar assurances, in regard to the extreme care that was bestowed upon the version of the Septuagint, and the reputation for accuracy which it had obtained among the learned Jews at Alexandria. As there is every reason to believe that the object contemplated by the projectors of this valuable work was to fulfil the desires entertained by the rulers of the synagogue, of supplying their people, resident in the Grecian kingdoms, with a copy of the Law in a language which they could read and understand; so we find that the Alexandrian version was authorised, by the high priest and Sanhedrim, to be used in all their places of divine worship, as a faithful translation from the Hebrew original, and as such entitled to the same respect and veneration with the other.

There can be no reason to doubt that this favourable judgment of the Jewish doctors, in relation to the accuracy of the Septuagint version of their Law, extended to the

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* Philo Judæus De Vita Mos. lib. xi. p. 510.—Ἐαν τε χαλδαιοι την Ἑλληνικην γλωτταν, ἐαν τε Ἑλληνες την χαλδαιων ἀναδιδαχθῶσι, και ἀμφοτερκις ταις γραφαις ἐπιτυχωσι, τη τε χαλδαικη και τη διερμηνευθειση καθαπερ ἀδελφας, μαλλον δε ὡς μιαν και την αὐτην ἐν τε τοις πραγμασι και τοις ὀνομασι τεθηπασι και προσκυνουσι, ὀυχ ἑρμηνεις ἐκεινους ἀλλ' ἱεροφαντας και προφητας προσαγορευοντες, ὁις ἐξεγενετο συνδραμειν λογισμους ἐιλικρινεστι τῳ Μωσεως καθαρωτατῳ πνευματι.

dates and genealogies which are incorporated with that most ancient portion of the sacred writings; whence we are at liberty to infer, that the numerical statements inserted in the translation were a true and faithful copy of those which were found in the original Hebrew text. Proceeding on this ground, we shall, it is presumed, succeed in proving not only that the present difference between the chronology of the Greek Scriptures and that of the Hebrew did not always exist; but also that the alteration must have been made in the latter, and not in the former. The proof is as follows:

1. Demetrius, who lived in the reign of Ptolemy the fourth, about 220 years before Christ, wrote a history of the Jewish kings, which we find quoted by Alexander Polyhistor, and preserved in the volumes of Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea.* In this work the author follows the chronology of the Seventy, which, there is no doubt, was, at that time, the same with the Hebrew; stating, that, from Adam to the migration of Jacob's family into Egypt, there elapsed a period of 3624 years; and that, from the flood to the same migration, the number of years was 1360. This statement agrees exactly with that of the Greek version; for, according to it,

From the creation to the deluge were	2262 years.
—— deluge to birth of Abraham,	1072
—— birth to leaving Haran,	75
—— thence to migration of Jacob's family,	215
	3624

This agreement is very remarkable; and, as Demetrius wrote only about 66 years after the Septuagint translation was made, it is not to be supposed that, at so early a period,

* See Præparatio Evangelica, lib ix. c. 21. p. 422.

any material difference between the Greek and the Hebrew Scriptures could have taken place. The quotation by Polyhistor does not, indeed, bring down the chronology of Demetrius to a lower date than that now mentioned; but if, to the sum just specified, we add 215 years, for the time that the sons of Jacob sojourned in Egypt, and 592, according to Josephus, for the period between the exode and the building of Solomon's temple, and, lastly, 1016, being the interval between the epoch of the temple and the vulgar Christian era, we shall have the amount, from the creation to the birth of our Saviour, as follows:

From Adam to the migration of Jacob's family,	3624
The residence of that family in Egypt,	215
From exode to foundation of temple,	592
—— temple to the Christian era,	1016
	5447

This result exceeds the computation of Jackson only 21 years, and that of Hales not more than 36; while it does not differ more than six years from the period which I shall hereafter endeavour to establish as the true one. But the principal value attached to the numbers of Demetrius arises from their coincidence with the chronology of the Septuagint and Josephus, as well for the long period which passed before the flood, as for that which measures the lives of the patriarchs in the succeeding age of the world.

2. In less than fifty years after the date of the work we have just been considering, another history of the Jewish kings was written by Eupolemus; founded, as also the former appears to have been, on the narrative of the Septuagint. For the quotation from that work, which we are about to give, the reader is indebted to the industry of Clement of Alexandria, who has copied into the first book

of his Miscellanies several of the chronological notices of Eupolemus. "All the years that can be collected," says the latter author, "from Adam even till the fifth of Demetrius, the monarch of Syria, and the 12th of Ptolemy, who reigned in Egypt, are 5149."* Now, the fifth year of Demetrius, and the twelfth of Ptolemy the son of Lagus, may be taken as the 295th before the common era of our redemption; the sum of which numbers amounts, as before, to 5444, from Adam to Christ.

The united testimony of these two eminent historians, carries with it a strong degree of conviction in favour of the agreement which must have subsisted, in their time, between the original Hebrew Scriptures and the authorised version, in respect at least to the relative antiquity and succession of events. Nor is there any ground to suspect, that the smallest change was introduced into either text during the lapse of more than three hundred years afterwards; for the only chronological statement that is handed down to us in the New Testament corresponds with the numbers of the Septuagint, while it is directly at variance with those of the modern Hebrew. We allude to the narrative of St Paul, as recorded in the 13th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

3. This holy man, when addressing the Jews at Antioch, reminded them, that God had brought their fathers out of Egypt with a high hand,—"And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness. And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot. And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them

* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. i. p. 338.

Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king."

The apostle here declares, that from the division of the land "until Samuel the prophet, was about the space of four hundred and fifty years." If to that sum we add the years that passed between the exode and the partition of the promised inheritance, and also the time that the government of the Hebrews was exercised by Samuel, Saul, and David, with the first three years of Solomon, we shall find that, in estimating the period from the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt to the foundation of the temple, the historical outline given by St Paul accords precisely with the numbers of Josephus, and consequently with the numbers contained in the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, as they existed in his days.

From exode to division of lands,	46
—— division to Samuel,	450
—— government of Samuel,	12
—— reign of Saul,	40
—— reign of David,	40
—— first three years of Solomon's reign,	3
	591

Now Josephus relates, that the temple was begun in the fourth year of Solomon, five hundred and ninety-two years after the people were delivered from Egyptian bondage; and it is worthy of especial remark, that, in regard to the dates of these memorable occurrences, we have found the judgment of the historian amply confirmed by the narrative of an inspired apostle. Such a complete agreement in regard to very ancient epochs is hardly to be expected;

but when it does occur, it leaves no room for doubt that the several writers must have followed an authority essentially the same; and that the archives, whence they derived their materials, had not yet been tampered with by the deceitful genius of hypothesis and controversy.

4. But one of the strongest proofs that we possess, for the agreement of the Greek version with the Hebrew original, so far down even as the end of the first century of the Christian faith, is derived from the unquestionable fact, that Josephus compiled his Antiquities from the Hebrew Scriptures, and that his chronological numbers coincide with those of the Septuagint. In the preface to the great work now mentioned, as also in the opening of his first book against Apion, he states, in the plainest and most distinct terms, that he drew his materials from the Hebrew Scriptures; translating them, as he proceeded, into the Greek language.* That he was at the same time well

* As some writers have maintained that Josephus was ignorant of Hebrew, and must have compiled his Antiquities from the Septuagint translation, we transcribe the following remarks from Hody, De Hist. S. Scrip. Part I. lib. iii. c. 1.:—" It is certain, by Josephus' own express testimony, that they are entirely deceived who imagine that he was ignorant of the Hebrew language, and always wrote out of the Greek version. For he several times assures us, that he composed his history of the Jewish Antiquities out of the Hebrew itself, and that he was only an interpreter of the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus, in the proœme to his celebrated Antiquities, ' I have,' says he, ' undertaken the present work, as hoping it will appear to all the Greeks worthy of their study. For it will contain all the ancient accounts of our nation, and the constitution of our government, interpreted (translated) out of the Hebrew records.' In the tenth book of his Antiquities, chapter tenth, he observes, ' that no one ought to blame me that I insert this concerning Nebuchadnezzar in my history, as I find it in the ancient books. For I have long ago given an answer to such sort of reflections in the beginning of this history, where I profess myself merely one that interprets (translates) the Hebrew volumes into the Greek tongue, and where I promised that I would faithfully relate the contents of those volumes without adding to or taking from them any thing of my own.' In the first book against Apion, he says of himself, ' I have interpreted (translated) out of the Sacred Scriptures, our whole ancient history; as being of a sacerdotal family, and having been instructed in that wisdom which is contained in those Scriptures.' And, at

acquainted with the version of the Seventy is made manifest, by the several references which he makes to the story of its production, under the auspices of the Egyptian monarch, as also by the repeated encomiums which he bestows upon its accuracy and usefulness. It is equally certain that he was a complete master of the Hebrew tongue, and thereby fully qualified to form a judgment as to the fidelity of that celebrated translation. He himself assures us, in the introduction to his Jewish War, that he originally composed that treatise in Hebrew, and afterwards turned it into Greek, for the conveniency of those of his countrymen who lived under the Roman government, and did not understand the sacred language of their own nation. It is perfectly clear, therefore, that if there was, in the early times of Christianity, any difference between the Hebrew Scriptures and the Greek, no one was more able or more likely to discover it than Josephus; for he not only possessed an intimate and critical knowledge of both languages, but,

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the end of his Antiquities, he informs us, 'that he did not learn the Greek language till after the Hebrew;' adding, 'with the like diligence have I delivered the history of the kings, the state of our nation, and the power of our monarchs, in an entire compliance with the authority of the sacred volumes, as I undertook to do at the beginning. And I may venture to say farther, that no other Jewish writer, nor any one of another nation, could deliver this history with so much exactness to the Greeks as myself. For I am perfectly acquainted with the learning of my own nation, as my countrymen do acknowledge. I have also studied the Grecian literature, and am not unacquainted with that language, although my education would not suffer me perfectly to attain its pronunciation,' &c. Josephus tells us elsewhere, that he did not thoroughly learn Greek till he became constantly resident at Rome after the destruction of Jerusalem."

Is it not surprising that Dr Playfair, in the face of these strong and repeated declarations, should assert, as he does in his System of Chronology, p. 32, "that it is evident he (Josephus) made use of the translation without having consulted the original?" In this, I am aware, he has followed the opinion of Salmasius, Bochart, Capellus, and Abarbanel; but their position is not tenable against the arguments of Vossius, Hody, and Whiston.—*See Isaaci Vossii Castigationes ad Scriptum Georgii Hornii de Ætate Mundi*, 1659.

from his professional duties as a priest, and his literary pursuits as an historian, he was necessarily led to a profound study of the sacred volume.

But Josephus, so far from objecting to the chronology of the Septuagint, has conferred upon it the most decided and complete confirmation. In his Antiquities, and also in the first book of his tract addressed to Apion, he informs his reader, that the sacred books of the Hebrews contained a history of five thousand years; beginning of course at the creation, and ending with the canon of Scripture in the reign of Artaxerxes. Now, if to 5000 or rather 5017 years we add the 464 which, according to Ptolemy, intervened between the time of this Persian sovereign and the era of Redemption, we shall have, as the period from Adam to Christ, 5481 years; being only 40 years more than the computations of Demetrius and Eupolemus,—an apparent discrepancy which I shall hereafter fully explain and remove. In truth, we are warranted to assume a coincidence considerably closer than that now stated; for several writers have adduced satisfactory evidence, for bringing the termination of the scriptural canon thirty or forty years lower than the first of Artaxerxes: in which case the agreement of Josephus and the two other historians of the Jewish kings with the most approved of modern chronologists would be found almost complete. Prideaux, for example, dates the close of the canon at 429 B.C.; Hales computes it at 423, being the last year of Artaxerxes; Usher prefers 415, and Lloyd comes as far down as 397 B. C. If we adopt the calculation of Prideaux, the result, 5429 from the creation to the Christian era, will coincide very nearly with the views of Jackson; the estimate of the latter, as we have seen above, being 5426. If we fix on the number of Usher, we shall have, for the same period, 5415 years; being only four more than the amount evolved

by Hales, from a laborious examination of the best authorities. But the reader will soon be convinced, that such accommodations are not at all necessary to effect a complete agreement.

Such a coincidence, it is obvious, could not be accidental. In no particular are authors of the best faith and the greatest industry found so frequently to differ from one another, as in the minute details of chronology. Ignorance of transcribers, party views, and the thousand other casualties to which manuscripts are exposed, especially during times of intellectual darkness, have occasioned such a degree of confusion, and even of contradiction, in many of the most valuable writings of antiquity, that every reader encounters an almost insuperable difficulty in his attempts to reconcile the jarring statements, and the varying dates, which incessantly impede his progress through those ancient records. When, therefore, we find that three historians who wrote on the same subject, at times and places considerably removed from one another, and who derived their materials from different sources—two of them from the Septuagint, and the third from the Hebrew original—and who yet agree, not only in the substance of the events and occurrences which they narrate, but even in the order, succession, relative distance, and chronological position, and more especially in the length of the gross period which these events occupied, from the commencement to the very end of the series, are we not under a moral necessity to conclude that, in regard at least to the principal facts and dates contained in the archives to which they had recourse, the original and the version must have been entirely the same?

It is well known, besides, that Josephus gives his testimony in favour of Demetrius and Eupolemus, joining with them, in his eulogy, the elder Philo; saying, that "they

had not erred much from the truth" in their historical works. But could he have made this declaration in support of their accuracy and information had he perceived a discrepancy between their chronological reckonings and that of the Hebrew text, to the extent of 1461 years? He could not assuredly have described such an error as a slight mistake that ought to pass without animadversion. We are, therefore, entitled to conclude that, in the days of Josephus, as well as in those of the annalists who preceded him as compilers from the Jewish Scriptures, there was no difference in the numerical statements of the Greek version, as compared with the text of the original Hebrew.

In a word, before the second century of the Christian religion, no traces can be found of any controversy as to differences supposed to exist in the Greek and Hebrew texts of the sacred books; either between Jews and Christians, who were then the two great sects which divided the descendants of Abraham; or between those Jews who used the Hebrew Scriptures and those who used the Greek.* All the authors who quote the Old Testament at that early period, whether Jews, as Philo and Josephus, or our Saviour, his apostles, and their immediate followers, have recourse to the Hebrew text and the Septuagint indiscriminately, without indicating the slightest suspicion in respect to the accuracy of the latter, or even affording the most distant ground to imagine that they were aware of any copy or version, which contained facts and dates different from those which were generally received. There seems indeed to have been but one Bible and one reading of that Bible, from the days of Demetrius to those of Josephus; and both, as to narrative and to doctrine, a quotation from

* Whiston's Essay towards restoring the true Text of the Old Testament, p. 11.

the Seventy was held equally conclusive and satisfactory with a direct citation from the original language of Moses and the prophets?* By all persons, whether Jews, Pagans, or Christians, and whether inspired or uninspired, the Septuagint was regarded, during four hundred years, as a full and correct version of the ancient Hebrew oracles.

If, as a learned author † observes, there had been then any such remarkable differences as we now find between the Hebrew Scriptures and the Greek; the first century was the most proper time to have had them exposed and ascertained; for it was in this century that a new religion, in a great measure opposed to the Jewish, as then understood, made its appearance in the world. This new faith all along alleged for its divine authority a multitude of texts taken out of the Bible; an authority which was read and expounded in the synagogues every Sabbath-day, and which was accordingly accessible to every Jew who could compare one passage of holy writ with another. Now, had the Septuagint version, from which the Christian quotations appear to have been almost exclusively made, been then as different from the Hebrew as it is at present, and as it has certainly been from the days of Origen, it is morally impossible that such variations should not have been discovered and loudly complained of, by the enemies of the gospel. Nothing so much provokes the resentment, or affords a more justifiable occasion for expressing the angry feelings of a controversialist, than the detection of dishonesty in the use of written authorities; and no class of men have been more ready than the Jews to chastise the fraud of their opponents in this particular, and to expose

* Hody de Hist. S. Scrip. Interp. Part I. lib. iii. c. 1; and Will's Chronology of Josephus, p. 16, prefixed to L'Estrange's edition.

† Whiston, Essay towards restoring the true Text of the Old Testament, p. 12.

every spurious or corrupted citation. The Hellenist, it is true, in many instances, could not compare with critical accuracy the expression of the two languages in which the word of divine truth was contained, nor weigh the precise import of every term which, in the original volume, addressed itself to the eye of the faithful; but such want of knowledge could not prove an obstacle to the researches of the learned Rabbi and the sedulous Scribe in the schools of Jerusalem, nor disarm the zeal of the bigoted Pharisee, who had numbered every word and letter in the holy text, on which his faith and his rites were supported. Finding then, that no collision of opinion between Jews and Christians, in regard to the integrity and faithfulness of the Greek version, ever took place during the first century of our religion; but that the original and the translation were equally esteemed, and held of equal authority both as to facts and dates; we are entitled to conclude that the variations which now appear in the sacred text must have had their origin at a later period.

Section III.

That a change in the ancient Jewish chronology has been introduced, either into the Hebrew Scriptures or into the version of the Seventy, is fully established; that this alteration was made in the former, and not in the latter, is, I think, placed beyond all reasonable doubt; and that it was accomplished about the beginning of the second century, will be rendered extremely probable by the following considerations:—

1. In the first place, from the unsettled state of the Jews during their successive wars with the Romans, and particularly after their final expulsion from their native country, a great number of their sacred books was either

destroyed or lost; while those that remained, being confined to that single people, of whom only a few retained any knowledge of the language of Moses and of the earlier prophets; the chance of corruption, arising even from the ordinary causes which affect the purity of all manuscripts, was thereby not a little increased. The Septuagint, on the other hand, was in the possession not only of the learned Jews who resided in the various parts of Asia Minor, but, as has been already observed, was read in their synagogues throughout the whole of these provinces, as well as in Syria, Africa, and Egypt. It was moreover in the hands of the Christians over all the East, to whom it had, in fact, become the authorised form or channel through which, in public and in private, they were accustomed to receive the written Word of God. The hazard of corruption from accident was thus very materially diminished; while any attempt to make a general or systematic alteration in the ancient chronology must appear to have been absolutely impossible. Such an undertaking, it is evident, could only succeed where the copies of the sacred volume were few in number; where the language in which it was written was not familiarly understood; and where the persons who possessed those copies were likely to feel the influence of a common motive, sufficiently strong to overcome their hereditary scruples, and to produce unanimity in the plan and prosecution of a pious fraud.

2. The Jews, it has been alleged, were, soon after the age of the apostles, placed in those very circumstances which we have now imagined. About the end of the first century, the religion of Christ began to make a rapid progress throughout the Roman empire; and had already indeed excited the fears and resentment of the more rigid followers of the Mosaical law. These persons were in a particular manner provoked, to find that some of the

strongest arguments in support of the new faith were drawn from their own Scriptures; and that every one who attempted to impress on the descendants of Abraham, that Jesus was the Messias promised to their fathers, had recourse to the writings of their own prophets, and to the sublime descriptions of the most admired of their sacred writers. It was then that the bigoted Jews first found occasion to regret the version of the Seventy. Divine Providence had thereby placed the oracles of the ancient church in the hands of the most learned and inquisitive people on the face of the earth; expressed too in a language which all classes of men could read, and carrying on them the sanction of the highest authority, even among the Jews themselves, for correctness and fidelity. It is said, that the Rabbis on this occasion allowed their rage and disappointment to carry them to such a length as to institute an annual fast, on which they cursed the day that saw the Septuagint completed; comparing it to that ominous and fatal hour when their ancestors made the golden calf in the wilderness.*

The early Christian writers have charged the Jews with violating to a considerable extent those parts of the Hebrew Scriptures which contained predictions respecting

* Scaliger. Animad. in Euseb. Chron. and Emendat. Temp. Chron. Antiq., vol. i. p. 93. From the fact stated in the text, Scaliger hastily infers that the Jews resident in Palestine never approved of the Septuagint translation; whereas it is certain not only that it was undertaken with the consent and approbation of their Sanhedrim, but even authorised by that body to be every where used as an exact and faithful interpretation of their Law. Nor is there the smallest evidence to prove that the Jews ever expressed any objection in regard to it, until they had procured other versions of their ancient Scriptures more suited to their views, as the adversaries of Christianity. We have, besides, the authority of Philo for asserting, that every year, down to his own time, the Jews celebrated a public festival in the island of Pharos, where the translation of the Seventy was supposed to have been made, to keep alive the memory of that important event, and to offer their thanksgiving to God for so great a benefit.

the time and character of the Messias. With those general accusations we have at present no farther concern than as they tend to justify the suspicion, which is established on other grounds, that the doctors of the synagogue did, prior to the middle of the second century, introduce a material change into the chronology of the more ancient portion of their sacred books. The reasons of their conduct in taking this unhallowed step have been explained as follows:

3. There prevailed, among several of the nations of antiquity, a tradition, which, we believe, may be traced to the mysticism of Jewish interpretation, that the world, in its present form, was to last only six thousand years or ages. The authorities on which this opinion was founded are not unworthy of the theological views in which it had its origin. In the first verse of the first chapter of the book of Genesis, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which, when used as a numeral, denotes a thousand, happens to be used six times; and hence the cabalists inferred, that this portion of the visible universe was to terminate, or at least to undergo a complete change, when six millenary periods had performed their round. Again, because six days were employed by Almighty God in the creation of the globe, after which he rested on the seventh; and as with Him a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years, it was concluded by the learned amongst the Jews, that the world was to continue only six thousand years; and that upon the completion of this period, there was to succeed a Sabbath of corresponding length, a millennium of rest, and peace, and uninterrupted enjoyment.

The belief of this singular notion has been detected in the writings of Heathens, Jews, and Christians. It is traced in the Sibylline oracles, in Hesiod, in the work ascribed to Darius Hystaspes the king of the Medes, and

in Hermes Trismegistus, the celebrated founder of Egyptian learning and science. Plato quotes from Orpheus the same mystical doctrine; handing down to more recent times the persuasion of the first generations of the human race, that the earth, which was given to them for a habitation during six ages, was doomed in the seventh to be consumed by fire.* The opinion was adopted by the most distinguished of the early Christian fathers, by Clement of Alexandria, Timotheus, and Theophilus of Antioch, who observed, that upon the sixth day God made man, and man fell by sin; so upon the sixth day of the Hexchiliad, or sixth millenary age of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ came to save man by his cross and resurrection.†

This notion of six days' creation, as implying that the world should continue in its present state six thousand years, and then be destroyed or changed, has, as Dr Jackson remarks, no foundation in Scripture; nor is the word *day*, there, ever used as meaning figuratively a thousand years; neither is this implied in the expressions of the Psalmist or of St Peter; and yet it is certain, he adds, that both the ancient Jews and Christians so understood it. As they agreed that the world was to end, and a new state of things to begin, after six thousand years were completed; so they also agreed, that Christ was to come in the sixth millennium; and this latter period they identified with that which in Scripture is called *the last days*, *the last times*, and *the coming ages*,—phrases which were unanimously interpreted as denoting the era of the Messias,

* Ἑπτὰ ἐν γενεῇ κατακαυσεται κόσμος ἀιδής.—Philebos, p. 157.

† See a volume by John Gregory, prebendary of Salisbury, entitled, "Gregorii Posthuma," and published by Mr John Gurgany, B.D. of Merton College, in the year 1650.

and the great events which were to follow his appearance.*

The prevalence of these opinions and expectations, however ill-founded, and even absurd they may seem, enables us to discover the principal motive which actuated the Jews, about the beginning of the second century, in their attempt to vitiate the most ancient of their chronicles. Their rejection of Christ rendered necessary an extensive change in their dates and calculations; and, if we may trust to the assertions of Justin Martyr and other primitive apologists for our holy faith, we cannot doubt that their fraudulent purpose was realized to a considerable extent. "I entreat you to remember," says the Father now named, when addressing Trypho the Jew, "that your Rabbis have taken away entirely many texts of Scripture from that version which was made by the Elders who were at the court of Ptolemy; in which it was declared, that Jesus who suffered death upon the cross was both God and man; and wherein it was also predicted, that he was to be crucified and submit to the power of the grave. These texts, because I know that your nation now rejects them, I will not insist upon in the course of our inquiries, but shall content myself with appealing to those prophecies and descriptions respecting the divine power, which are still allowed to remain in your sacred books." After quoting a passage from Jeremiah, which the Christian

* Theopompus, who flourished 341 years before Christ, relates, that the Persian Magi taught, that the present state of things would continue six thousand years; after which, hades or death would be destroyed, and men would be happy, and live without food, and their bodies would cast no shadows (being refined and spiritualized). It was also the opinion of Zoroastres, the founder of the Magian sect, that the earth, after the general dissolution and destruction of Arimanius (the evil principle), would all be a plain, and make one city, wherein men would live together in a happy state, and all use one language.—Apud Plut. *de Isid. et Osir.* as quoted by Jackson, vol. i. p. 98.

author applies to the point in discussion, as an argument in favour of the views adopted by the church, he reminds his antagonist, that the text in question was still found in certain copies of the Old Testament which continue to be read in the synagogues; for, says he, this portion of holy writ has been but lately expunged by your doctors; and that on account of the unanswerable demonstration which was founded upon it, in regard to the conduct of the Jews towards Christ, against whom it was predicted that they would take counsel, and afterwards put him to death.*

But the species of corruption which is more immediately connected with our inquiry, is that which respects the dates contained in the Hebrew text, rather than the narrative and predictions which it sets forth; and in this department, we have great reason to suspect, that the alterations were more extensive and systematic than in any other. A learned author, the celebrated Abulfuragius, asserts that the Jews, believing it to have been foretold in the law and the prophets, that Christ was to be sent in the *last times*, in order to produce a reason or apology for rejecting him, altered the chronology of the world. The different epochs, he observes, being computed by the generations of the patriarchs, or the age at which the eldest sons were born, the Rabbis subtracted from Adam's age when he begat Seth a hundred years, and added them to the remainder of his life; and they did the same in the lives of most of his posterity down to Abraham. Thus it was made to appear, by their new computation, that Christ was manifested in the very beginning of the fifth millen-

* Just. Mar. Dialog. cum Tryphone. Dr Cave, in his Historia Literaria, Part II. in Joseph. remarks, that, "Judæis solenne erat, postquam Religio Christiana invaluerat, omnia librorum suorum loca, vel corrumpere vel subtrahere, quibus fides Christiana niteretur."

nium, near to the middle of the period to which the duration of the earth was to be limited, being, according to their interpretations of Scripture, not more than seven thousand years in all. Therefore, said they, we are still in the middle of the time allotted to the world; and the epoch appointed for the appearance of the Messiah has not yet arrived. But the computation of the Septuagint, he concludes, showed that Christ did actually come in the sixth millenary age of the world; the very time at which the prediction of the Old Testament led mankind to expect his advent.*

Augustine, in like manner, relates that the Jews were suspected of having corrupted their copies of the ancient Scriptures, and particularly of having altered the generations and lives of the antediluvian patriarchs; and this they did, he says, out of dislike to the Christians, and in order to weaken the authority of the Septuagint, which was used by the latter, not only in their churches during the public service, but also in their writings and controversies with the adherents of the synagogue. Though he saw clearly that all the temptation to vitiate the sacred text was on the side of the Jewish doctors, and that the Greek translators could have no inducement whatever to depart

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* Differentiam computûs LXX. interpretum et Hebræorum ab anno mundi ad Abrahamum doctoribus Judæorum (adscribendam), nam cum pronunciatum esset in lege et prophetis de Messia, missum iri ipsum in *ultimis temporibus*, nec aliud esset Rabbinis antiquioribus commentum quô Christum rejicerent, quam si hominum ætates quibus dignosceretur mundi Epocha mutarent: subtraxerunt de vita Adami donec nasceretur Seth centum annos, eosque reliquiæ ipsius vitæ addiderunt; idemque fecerunt in vitis reliquorum Adami filiorum usque ad Abrahamum; atque ita factum est ut indicet ipsorum computus manifestatum esse Christum millenario quinto (ineunte) prope accedente ad medium annorum mundi, qui omnes, secundum ipsos, futuri sunt septies mille: *Nos adhuc in medio temporis sumus, et nondum adest tempus adventui Messiæ designatum.* At computus Septuaginta indicat manifestatum esse Christum millenario sexto atque adfuisse tempus ipsius.—*Hist. Dyn. Edit. Pococke*, p. 72, 73.

from the literal meaning of the original which lay before them, Augustine was yet unwilling to believe that either party could have intentionally altered the divine oracles; thinking it more probable that the differences between the Hebrew and the Alexandrian version, had originated in the wish entertained by an early transcriber, to render the *generations* of the patriarchs more natural, and less disproportioned to the total length of their lives.* But the African bishop was not aware that four hundred years had elapsed from the time at which the version was made, before any discrepancy between the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures was ever imagined to exist. He appears not to have known that, between the reign of Philadelphus and the birth of Christ, there flourished several authors, such as Demetrius, Philo, Euphorus, Eupolemus, and Alexander Polyhistor; in whose writings, compiled from the books of Moses, we find the events, numbers, dates, and even proper names, agreeing with the text of the Septuagint, but varying in many essential points from the modern Hebrew.† Nor did he advert to the still more remarkable fact, that in the volumes of Josephus, who drew the materials of his great work from the original text of the Old Testament, and who had the version of the Seventy in his possession with which to compare his narrative as he went along, there is found, not only an ample confirmation of the general accuracy of the Greek translation, regarded simply as a literary performance, but also the most satisfactory evidence that, even in the time of that renowned historian, there was no difference between the original and the version in respect either of fact or of date. The alterations, therefore, to which I allude

* Augustine de Civit. Dei, lib. xv. c. 11—13.

† Vossius, Castigationes ad Script. Geo. Horn. et Dedicat.

could not have taken place prior to the era of Josephus: their origin, as I have already observed, must be sought for at a period considerably later.

4. It appears to have been about the year 130 that the Jews introduced their abbreviated system of ancient chronology. A short time before the date now mentioned, a new translation of the Old Testament into Greek was brought forward under the auspices of their leading Rabbis,—the object of which was to bring into discredit the venerable work of the Seventy; and, by degrees, to supersede the use of it altogether in the worship of the synagogue. This dishonest task was, in the year 128, performed by Aquila, a learned man, and originally a Pagan priest; but who, after having embraced Christianity, was, for his immoral conduct, expelled from the bosom of the church, and forced to seek an asylum among the Jews, to whose religion he soon afterwards became a bigoted convert.

The liberties which Aquila used with the original were soon perceived and exposed. Epiphanius, for instance, charges him with a studied deviation from the meaning of the Septuagint; and with wresting the Scriptures to a sense altogether new, in order to invalidate the testimonies contained in Moses and the prophets concerning Christ. Nor was this translator satisfied with new glosses and unauthorised interpretations; for the same author adds, that he even proceeded so far as to violate the integrity of the Hebrew text.*

* *De Mensuris et Ponderibus*, cap. 15.—"Aquila," says he, "set about his translation, not from an upright intention, but that he might corrupt some texts, in opposition to the interpretations of the Septuagint, and put a different sense on the testimonies of Scripture, in order to conceal his own shame in deserting Christianity." Of these corruptions and depravations he declares he could produce a whole catalogue.

Dr Kennicot informs us, that he found in the Bodleian library, among

Two years after the publication of Aquila's version, there appeared a work, entitled *Seder Olam Rabba*, or the Great Chronicle of the World; which presented to the Jews the first-fruits of those labours which the enemies of Christianity had bestowed upon the Hebrew writings. This curtailed system of chronology was put forth under the name of Rabbi Josi, and favoured by the countenance and recommendation of the notorious Akiba; who, in the reign of Adrian, supported the pretensions of Barchocab, the rebel and false Christ, and at length shared the fate of that wretched impostor.

The translation of Aquila was followed, at the distance of about sixty years, by the version of Symmachus; which, being at once more faithful as well as more serious in its style, gradually attained the object which the other was meant to serve; and superseded, among the Jews at least, the use of the Septuagint, which, till that period, they could not be induced to relinquish.

The publication of the *Seder Olam Rabba* may with certainty be regarded as marking the epoch at which the Jews altered their genealogies, and changed the dates of the great events which are recorded in their sacred books; at which, in a word, they adopted their abbreviated scheme of ancient chronology. But, although this corruption was introduced about the year of our Lord 130, it appears not

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...ne unpublished manuscripts, a tract written in Greek, containing the following characteristic notice relative to the spirit and object of the new version:—"Aquila," says this authority, "being filled with much rage, and imagining mischief in his heart, was transported by an unjust envy; and, anathematizing Christianity, he became a Jew: and having assiduously learned the power of the Hebrew elements, and being superficially instructed in the Hebrew tongue, he interpreted Scripture, wishing to conceal the testimonies concerning Christ. Whenever, therefore, you find in the Hebrew,—for even there also he obliterated,—or in the Greek, the testimonies concerning Christ disguised, know that it was the insidious contrivance of Aquila."—*See Kennicot's Dissertations on the State of the printed Hebrew Text.*

either to have been readily received, or to have made at the outset a rapid progress. Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, who died in A. D. 181, was the first Christian chronologer who attempted to compute the age of the world from the facts and dates only which are contained in the Bible; and, in pursuing this object, as he did not copy the statements of the Septuagint, he must have been possessed of a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures, or, at least, of the Pentateuch, which had escaped the innovations of Aquila and of Rabbi Josi. In his third book to Autolicus, we find that the bishop reckoned 2362 years from the creation to the deluge, and 1036 from the birth of Arphaxad, which took place two years after the flood, to the birth of Isaac,—a computation which gives 938 years from the flood to the birth of Abraham. These dates, as Dr Hales remarks, are incorrect, the former being too high, and the latter too low; but that he did not take them from the Septuagint is evident, first, from the fact that they are both different in the Greek version of the Scriptures, and next, from his omission of the second Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, whose name, in that part of holy writ, is found only in the translation of the Seventy.

Indeed, it appears that the abbreviated chronology was not generally introduced into the Hebrew Bible till a period considerably later than the times of Theophilus; and, in support of this opinion, we may observe, that Eusebius, who died about the middle of the fourth century, discovered in the Hebrew copies which he consulted, different accounts of the ancient eras,—some manuscripts following the larger, and others exhibiting the shorter, or curtailed computation. For this reason, as I shall afterwards have occasion to explain, he admitted into his *Chronicon* a different number from that which he had inserted in his *Evangelical Preparation*, as the length of the pe-

riod from the exodus to the foundation of Solomon's temple.

On this subject a judicious writer observes, that " although the Greek version, before the beginning of the second century, was esteemed as true and agreeable to the Hebrew by all, both Christians and Jews,—those Jews, I mean, who used the Septuagint, and those also that used the Hebrew,—yet, after the beginning of that century, the very Jews who had used the Greek began to call in question its authority, as not sufficiently true and consonant with the Hebrew text. Nor is it difficult to conjecture for what reason it was that they at this time began to raise a controversy about the authority of this version. The case was this: the Christians were wont to produce the testimonies of Scripture against the Jews out of this Greek version. The Jews were therefore obliged to appeal from that Greek version, which alone the Christians then understood, to the Hebrew text, which they understood not; and, in order to avoid the arguments of the Christians, they translated their original Scriptures in a different manner from that which had been followed by the authors of the Septuagint.

On avoit lû pendant quelques siecles cette traduction des Septante dans la meilleure partie des synagogues; les Juifs la faisoient aller, ce semble, de pair avec l'original Hebreu, et l'attribuoient a des prophetes inspirés de Dieu, et non pas a des simples interpretes. Mais comme ils virent que les chrêtiens se fondoient entierement sur cette version, ils la decrierent; et ce qui est assez etonnant, c'est que les Juifs qui avoient admiré la version des Septante, comme un ouvrage divin, la regarderent ensuite comme un livre funeste et maudit de Dieu. Ils feignirent que la terre fut couverte de tenebres pendant trois jours, a cause que la Loi avoit eté traduit en Grec, et ils ordonner-

ent qu'on feroit tous les ans un jeune pour ce sujet. Ils defendirent meme d'ecrire a l'avenir la Loi en d'autres caracteres qu'en caracteres Hebreu Juifs, et de communiquer aux Chrêtiens le texte de l'Ecriture, et meme de leur enseigner la langue Hebraique.—Un changement si prompt de la part des Juifs, principalement de ceux qui n'etaient point Hellenistes, ne peut etre attribué qu'a l'envie qu'ils porterent aux Chrêtiens.*

5. It is not to be denied that, from the mutual animosity which was excited between the Jews and Christians, by the recriminations of a long and sometimes a very bitter controversy, the charges of corruption advanced by the latter against the former were occasionally carried too far. But, at the same time, there is no doubt that, in regard to their genealogical tables, the Rabbis of the school of Tiberias made considerable alterations in the original text; and nothing proves so unanswerably that such changes were actually introduced, as the traces which still remain of the method according to which those learned doctors effected their purpose.

For example, in order to diminish, to the extent of six hundred years, the period between the creation and the deluge, it was only necessary, as I have already remarked, to subtract a hundred years from the generation of six of the antediluvian patriarchs, and to add the same to the residue of their lives. But, to accomplish this object without falling into the monstrous absurdity of extending the lives of Noah's father and grandfather beyond the flood, it was found indispensable to allow their generations to remain unaltered; and thus, while Enos is represented as becoming a father at 90, Cainan at 70, and Malaleel at 65, Methuselah does not behold his progeny till he has attained the mature age of 187, nor Lamech until he

* Simon, Histoire Critique de Vieux Testament, liv. i., chap. 17.

has reached his 182d year. The management which had become necessary to adjust the application of the scheme to the peculiar circumstances of every case, betrays the vitiating hand of the Rabbi. The exceptions, in fact, expose the corrupt intention of the general principle on which the innovation proceeded; for, as Enos lived to the age of 905, Cainan to 910, and Malaleel to 895, we can see no cause why they should have married 100 years earlier than Methuselah, whose sum of life was not much greater, and more especially than Lamech, who died at the age of 777. We can discover no intelligible ground for these singularities; but we can perceive, at the first glance, a powerful reason why the generations of Methuselah and Lamech should not be shortened, and the residue of their lives lengthened; and we conclude, that the hundred years were not taken from the former and added to the latter, merely because such a change would have extended the duration of their lives considerably beyond the limits of the antediluvian world.

The same remarks, somewhat modified, apply to the case of Jared.—"The Jews," says the author of the Chronological Antiquities, "had a mind to have left out a century in the ages of all the patriarchs before they begat children, and to have added it to the after-term of their lives; but they found that, if they dropped the centuries of the ages of Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech, before they begat children, as they had done of all the rest, and added them to the remainder of their lives, they must by this reckoning have extended their lives beyond the flood, contrary to the history of Scripture. The flood would have been placed in the year of the world 1356; and Jared, who was born in the year 460, and lived 962 years, would have died in the year 1422, which would have been 66 years after the flood. Methuselah would

be born, by the same computation, in the year 587; and, living 969 years, would have died in the year 1556, and 200 years after the flood. Lamech, also, would be born in the year 674, and, living 777 years, would die in the year 1451, which is 95 years after the flood. On this account, the Jews, not daring to shorten the lives of their patriarchs, left the original numbers standing before Methuselah and Lamech, and the Western Jews also before Jared; though they took away the century before Enoch, and added it to the rest of his age after he begat children, because his life was not half so long as any of the rest of the antediluvians, he being translated into heaven when he had lived 365 years." The management here, with respect to Enoch, after having passed over Jared, is certainly a strong proof of rabbinical interference.

It has been repeatedly remarked, that it is contrary to the ordinary course of nature that men should enter into the relations of matrimony before they have passed a ninth or tenth part of their lives; and that it is, in fact, not more likely than that children, in our days, should become parents at six or seven years of age. As a proof, too, that the generations of the more ancient patriarchs have been unduly curtailed, we are reminded of the remarkable fact, that the sons of Noah, who were all nearly a hundred years old at the deluge, had not then begun to have children; and it is probable, as Jackson remarks, that they had not been long married; or would not even have been married so soon, had it not been necessary for the propagation of mankind after the flood, that they should take wives with them into the ark; and yet the full extent of their lives, compared with that of their forefathers, was considerably diminished. We find that Shem, one of their number, had a son two years after the flood, when he was at least a hundred years old; but we do not read

that the other two brothers, one of whom, Japhet, seems to have been older than Shem, had children at so early a period; and surely it is absurd to suppose that these patriarchs should have been older before they became fathers than several of their ancestors, whose lives were from three to five hundred years longer.*

6. Another presumption against the integrity of the present Hebrew text, in point of ancient chronology, may be drawn from the fact, that the Jews themselves have not agreed as to the extent of the alterations which appeared necessary for the construction of their new system of dates, but have pushed their curtailments farther in some editions of the Scriptures than they have thought it expedient to carry them in others. For example, the Babylonian Jews shorten the period from the creation to the deluge a century more than their brethren in the West,—placing the flood in the year of the world 1556, instead of 1656; and this difference was obviously occasioned by the subtraction of 100 years from the generation of Jared, which were added, of course, to the remainder of his life.

In this arrangement we see the operation of the same principle, as it was employed by the Rabbis in the two great seminaries of Babylon and Tiberias, and limited, too, in its application by similar considerations. The object of both was to abbreviate the annals of the antediluvian world, without either affecting the longevity of the patriarchs who preceded Noah, or carrying their lives beyond the period which was imperatively determined by the narrative of their sacred historian. The doctors of the Eastern school carried to its utmost practicable limits the scheme which had been suggested to them by their

* Jackson's Chronological Antiquities, vol. i. p. 51.

brethren of the West; whereas the leading men in Judea satisfied themselves with a more sparing exercise of authority, and restricted the diminution of the nine generations from Adam down to the son of Lamech, to six hundred years. It was enough for the former of these learned bodies that they found, upon calculation, that the removal of a hundred years from the generation of Jared to the after-term of his life was perfectly consistent with the time of his death; which took place a century and somewhat more before the epoch which they had fixed for the deluge.

But the Samaritan Pentateuch, in respect to the period now under consideration, is even more corrupt than the Hebrew text, whether of Babylon or of Tiberias. According to this authority, the interval from Adam to the general deluge is reduced to 1307 years,—being 349 less than the Jewish computation, and 949 less than the tables of Josephus, founded upon the original records of the ancient Scriptures. The process of abbreviation seems to have been conducted as follows:—A century was taken away, in the first instance, from the generations of Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech; after which, for what reason is not apparent, 29 years were deducted from the last of these patriarchs before he became the father of Noah, and 20 from Methuselah, before he became the parent of Lamech. But the authors of this scheme soon perceived that, to secure consistency, they must carry their innovations to a greater extent than they had at first contemplated. They found it necessary not only to abstain, in the three instances just mentioned, from adding the century, which they took from the generation, to the residue of life, but even to deduct another century from the total amount of these patriarchs' years, that they might not encumber their calculations by an inconvenient longevity.

It will be seen, accordingly, by a reference to the Table given at page 52, that the Samaritan chronologists restrict the life of Jared to 847 instead of 962; that of Methuselah to 720 instead of 969; and that of Lamech to 653 instead of 777. The result proves satisfactorily the object of these gross corruptions: the three ancients, whose names have just been stated, are all made to die in the same year, and that, too, the very year of the flood!

A great degree of obscurity hangs over the history of the Samaritan Pentateuch. On the authority of Eusebius,* Montfaucon,† and Jackson,‡ we are warranted in concluding, that Origen had a copy of it; and even that, in his time, the chronology of this venerable edition of the most ancient of the sacred writings did not differ from the numbers of the Hebrew. But before the days of Eusebius, the alterations mentioned above had been generally introduced; whence we are led to infer, that the influence of Jewish prejudice must have extended to the Samaritan Scriptures about the end of the third century, and produced in them the corruptions which continue till the present time. It follows from this view, that the changes introduced into the Samaritan text, as compared with the Hebrew, and the version of the Seventy, were gradual and progressive. The numeration of the Jewish Scriptures appears to have been altered systematically, and all at once; whereas the Samaritans must have proceeded in the work of vitiation by degrees, and at different times,—a fact which seems proved by the variations which have been detected in the copies of the Pentateuch which passed through the hands of Origen and Eusebius. At first they did not venture to shorten the lives of Jared, Methuselah,

* Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. c. 16. † Montfauc. Hexapla, p. 158.
‡ Jackson, Chron. Antiq. vol. i. p. 55.

and Lamech, but only took away a hundred years from the generation of the eldest of these patriarchs, and added them to the residue of his life. In this they imitated the Eastern Jews; who, as I have already observed, diminished thereby the period between the creation and the general deluge, a century more than their brethren in Judea judged it right to shorten it; and there is reason to conclude that, in the time of Origen, their genealogical alterations had not proceeded to any greater length. But after this date the Samaritan doctors became less scrupulous. To give a uniform and consistent air to their system, they withdrew a century from the generations of Methuselah and Lamech; and then, that their lives might not extend beyond the flood, they made a suitable deduction from the total amount of their years. In the case of Methuselah, this deduction exceeded two centuries.*

7. It is deserving of notice, that, though the Jewish Rabbis changed the dates and numbers contained in the Mosaical Scriptures, they did not comprehend, in their new scheme, certain other ancient writings, which recognized the more correct and extensive chronology. The book of Enoch, for example, supposed to have been written by the patriarch of that name, and which is quoted or referred to by Eupolemus,† by the apostle Jude,‡ by St Peter,§ as well as by other Christian authors in the early ages of the church, narrates a fact, which, while it agrees with the numeration of the Septuagint and of Josephus, and consequently with the copies of the Hebrew text which were read by that historian, is quite irreconcilable with the altered dates of the modern Jewish Bible. We are told by the author of this apocryphal tract, that, in

* Chronological Antiquities, vol. i. p. 57. † Eusebii Præp. Evangel. lib. ix. c. 17. ‡ Jude v. 14. § Second Epistle, c. ii. v. 4.

the days of Jared, being the 1070th year of the world,* the Watchers, or Egregori, who, in the sixth chapter of Genesis, are called the sons of God, came down from the high country of Eden to the lower districts of Susiana; where, falling in love with the beautiful daughters of men, or descendants of Cain, they took to themselves wives of all whom they chose. Now, this narrative is perfectly consistent with the chronology of Josephus and the Septuagint; for, according to these authorities, Jared was born in the year of the world 960, and Enoch in the year 1122; consequently the days of Jared, which were limited by these two points, corresponded with the descent of the pious children of Seth, on the occasion which has just been described. But it corresponds not at all with the numbers of the modern Hebrew text, which places the birth of Jared in 460, and that of his son in 622, and thereby makes "the days" of the former of these patriarchs terminate at the last of the dates now specified; being 448 years before the time mentioned in the book of Enoch, as synchronizing with part of the generation of Jared, which did not end until fifty-two years after the event in question. The reader, therefore, will, it is presumed, be ready to adopt the opinion of Jackson, who thinks, that "this ancient testimony, from the book of Enoch, is a great confirmation of the truth of the Greek chronology of Scripture, and that the Hebrew chronology must have originally agreed with it."†

Another passage from the same ancient book, cited by Alexander Polyhistor,‡ still farther confirms the chronology of the Septuagint, and gives strength to our suspicions respecting the integrity of the Masorite Hebrew.

* See Syncel. Chronographia.
† Chron. Antiq. vol. i. p. 63.
‡ Syncel. Chron. p. 33.

The author relates, that, in the 165th year of Enoch, which was the year of the world 1286, the archangel Uriel, who presided over the stars, discovered to Enoch what the month was, and what the tropical year. This statement is exactly conformable to the Greek chronology, while it is quite inconsistent with the modern text of the Jewish Scriptures; for, according to the latter, the 165th year of Enoch was only the 787th year from the creation, and consequently 499 years at variance with the document now before us.

The Septuagint chronology, which, we may repeat, is here always understood to be the same as that of the ancient Hebrew text, before it was, in the second century, altered by the Jewish doctors, receives an additional corroboration from another ancient publication entitled the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs. In this work, under the article *Benjamin*, it is stated, that Cain was two hundred years old when his afflictions began, being driven out from the presence of God for the murder of his brother; which event, as it took place before the birth of Seth, establishes the accuracy of the Septuagint computation in regard to the age of Adam when his third son was born. According to the modern reading of the Bible, Adam was only 130 years old at the nativity of Seth,—an error which must be corrected by the addition of a full century.*

There is a great variety of similar traditions, of which some traces happen to be preserved in ancient authors, both Jewish and Christian; and it is worthy of special attention, that, however groundless and absurd the events may be to which these legends bear a reference, the system of dates, by which their order is determined, corresponds exactly with the lengthened chronology of the Septuagint

* Grabe. Specileg. Patrum, as quoted by Jackson.

and of Josephus, while they cannot by any means be made to coincide with the abbreviated scheme of the Masorites.*

Selden, we may add, has recorded, on the authority of a manuscript copy of the Annals of Eutychius, that the Eastern nations had an ancient received tradition, that Seth died in the 20th year of Enoch, and that Enos died in the 53d year of Methuselah: both of which statements agree exactly with the chronology of the Septuagint, but are quite at variance with that of the present Hebrew copies.

8. We are farther confirmed in our opinion, that great freedoms have been used with the numbers of the ancient Scriptures, and that the chronology of the Greek version is the true one, by a circumstance well known to every biblical scholar, namely, that, in the period from the flood to the birth of Abraham, the dates of the Samaritan Pentateuch nearly correspond with those of the Septuagint and of Josephus. The simple fact, that there is a difference between the Samaritan and the Hebrew, proves irresistibly that an alteration has been made in the one or in the

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* In *Beresith Rabba*, qui liber est maximæ auctoritatis apud ipsos Judæos, tradunt Rabbini Adamum ab Eva uxore abstinuisse post Abelis necem 131 annos, quibus elapsis, cognovit eam iterum, quæ concipiens peperit ei Seth; ex his autem videntur Judæi putare annos Adami a morte Abelis ad nativitatem Seth solum, rejectis iis qui necem illam antecesserunt. Hanc receptissimam Hebræorum traditionem citant R. Moses Egyptius in More Nebochim, lib. i. c. 7., Midras Tanchuma sive Iclammedence, R. Selomo, in Gen. iv. 25., Elias in Thesbi, voce Lilith, et alii; at quis cordatus et intellectu præditus facile sibi persuadebit, eodem Adami creationis anno Cainum et Abelem genitos fuisse, ac eodem anno contigisse fratricidium. Necessario igitur sequitur Adamum cum genuit Seth ætate majorem fuisse quam 130 annorum, quos ipsi tribuit præsens Judæus textus a sua creatione ad nativitatem Seth; et sane multo vero similius est ex illius temporis conditione Abelem vita defunctum fuisse annos agentem 100, qui additi annis 130, quibus Adamus abstinuit ab Eva post illam necem, conficent anni 230, quos Adamo Septuaginta editio tribuit. Huic opinioni de abstinentia Adami eo temporis intervallo, Orientales omnes adstipulantur.—*Abrah. Ecchel. Hist. Orient. Supplem.*

other; and that the change has been introduced into the latter and not into the former is rendered almost certain, as well by the agreement of the Samaritan computation with that of Josephus and the Seventy, as by the numerous absurdities which must attach to the historical details to which the Hebrew chronology is applied.

In the case of seven of the postdiluvian patriarchs, as well as with the greater number of those who lived before the flood, a hundred years are subtracted from their generations, and added to the after-term of their lives; by which means there is produced a discrepancy between the Hebrew text and Josephus of not less than seven centuries. But is it at all credible, that Arphaxad and his five immediate descendants should have children at the age of 30; when the others who succeeded them, and whose lives were not half as long, did not become fathers until they were more than double their age; Nahor at 79, Terah at 70, Abraham at 87; and still farther down, Isaac at 60, and Jacob at 84?*

In reference to this subject, we beg the attention of the reader to the following remarks, collected by Syncellus,† in his Chronographia, from the works of Eusebius and Africanus, in support of the Septuagint computation before the flood, and of the Septuagint and Samaritan for the interval between the deluge and the birth of Abraham. "Since, according to the most ancient Hebrew copy preserved among the Samaritans, and which agrees with the Septuagint translation, they who lived after the flood down to Abraham did not beget children till after the age of 100 years and more, what reason can be assigned

*Chronological Antiq. vol. i. p. 86.

† Syncelli Chronographia, p. 88, 89.—Tempore nimirum in vetustissimo Hebræorum exemplari quod apud Samaritas etiamnum asservatur, a quo Septuaginta Interpretum calculus nullatenus dissentit.

that their predecessors before the flood, whose lives were longer by many years, should begin to beget children sooner, and not rather at the ages set down in the Septuagint? On mature consideration, we must incline to the latter computation, and necessarily conclude, that the Jewish-Hebrew reckoning of the times, from Adam to Abraham, is wrong in all the ages excepting three, Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech; and that the Samaritan-Hebrew computation is also wrong in the period from Adam to the flood; for in the years from the flood to Abraham it agrees entirely with the Septuagint. But the error of the Jewish Hebrew text is evident from hence, that it makes Abraham and Noah contemporaries, which is inconsistent with all history: for since, according to the Hebrew text, there are no more than 292 years from the flood to Abraham, and since, according to the same text, Noah lived 350 years after the flood, it is evident that he lived to the fifty-eighth year of Abraham. Wherefore it is with reason that, in our chronography, we follow the computation of the Seventy, which was made, as appears, from an ancient uncorrupted Hebrew copy; especially since this version alone is received by the universal church of Christ, and was from the beginning recommended to be used by it, upon the authority of the apostles, and disciples of our Saviour."*

But the Hebrew computation for the times of the post-

* Respondeo numerum illum Mosi tribuendum, quem constat Ecclesiam Catholicam ab omni aevo ad haec usque tempora nulla cum interruptione amplexam esse. Quum autem ex iis quæ enarrata sunt, evidentissimum videatur non modo Ecclesiam Catholicam Septuaginta interpretum numeros perpetuo amplexam esse, sed etiam *Judæos Græcosque*, qui ante Apostolos aut ipsorum tempore scripsisse; eosdemque in *Hebraicis* exemplaribus LXX. interpretum ætate, et aliquot post ipsorum translationem annis descriptos fuisse: tandemque mutationem contigisse, quæ paulatim codices omnes Hebræos occupavit.—*Morinus De Hebræi Græcique textus sinceritate Exercit.* lib. vii. c. 4.

diluvian patriarchs is encumbered with so many contradictions and difficulties, arising especially from its utter inconsistency with the best-established facts in ancient history, that it is now every where rejected by sensible chronologists. "The more I have considered the early post-diluvian chronology," says a learned and indefatigable author, "the more convinced am I that the Oriental Christians did wisely in rejecting it, as palpably absurd and erroneous."*

Were we to adopt it, we must be prepared to allow, that, almost immediately after the flood, a gross apostacy from the true religion took place under the very eyes of Noah, and among his own sons and daughters. It is evident from Scripture, that, prior to the departure of Abraham from Chaldea, the countries of the East were overspread with idolatrous superstitions; whence we may infer, that the worship of the heavenly host, combined with the commemoration of deified men, had already superseded, in the very regions wherein the family of Noah was settled, the purer and more spiritual adoration of the one supreme God. If we follow the Hebrew chronology, we must admit, that the father of the faithful, who is described as dying "in a good old age, an old man and full of years," yet expired 35 years before Shem, who was born nearly a hundred years before the deluge, and nine generations before this son of Terah. We must farther believe, as already stated, that Abraham was contemporary with Noah more than half a century, and with Shem, as has just been said, during his whole life; that Isaac was born only 42 years after the death of Noah, and that he was contemporary with Shem 110 years: and as not the slightest mention is made of any intercourse between Abraham and those venerable

* See "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," &c. By George Stanley Faber, B. D.

patriarchs who survived the deluge, and were miraculously preserved as the second progenitors of the human race, we are to conclude, that this great reformer of religion wandered about from country to country, and from one kingdom to another people, either ignorant of their existence, or regardless of their authority, their knowledge, and their doctrines.*

Again, if we receive the Hebrew numeration as our guide, we shall find it incumbent upon us to remove the difficulties connected with the following statement. Abraham alone, of all the posterity of Shem, is said to have been admitted into covenant with God, through the rite of circumcision, and to have had great and peculiar blessings promised to himself and to his descendants in virtue of that covenant; and yet, according to the same chronology, Shem himself, the holy founder of Abraham's family after the flood, was still alive, and continued to live 109 years after the institution of circumcision, and, as we have repeatedly stated, 35 years even after the death of Abraham. Arphaxad, moreover, agreeably to the Hebrew computation, lived 82 years after the established use of the ritual ordinance now mentioned, Saleh 107 years, and Heber 172 years; and yet, in the sacred history, which has preserved for our instruction all the circumstances which marked the renewal of the covenant with the father of Isaac, we perceive not the most distant allusion to the existence of those venerable and pious men, who may be supposed to have cherished pure and entire the faith and practice of the Noachic religion. If all these righteous ancestors of Abraham were alive in his time, and even survived him so many years, on what ground shall we account for their not being on this occasion so much as

* Chronol. Antiq. vol. i. p. 86—90. Origin of Pagan Idolatry, vol. i. p. 417—420.

once mentioned in the inspired narrative, or admitted to a share of the blessings attached to the rite of initiation ?*

These difficulties, the reader is aware, arise altogether from the abbreviated chronology of the modern Hebrew text. According to the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch and Josephus, all these patriarchs, down to the fifth and sixth generations from Noah, were dead long before the time of Abraham; and they had finished their days, too, after the ordinary course of nature; the fathers going before the sons, and not, as we find in the Masorite scheme of genealogy, surviving ten or twelve generations of their descendants.

Illud vero non tantum ab omni verisimilitudine remotum, sed et absurdam prorsus, quod juxta hanc supputationem Noachus vixisset usque ad annum Abrahami quinquagesimum octavum. Semus vero supervixisset Abrahamo toti triginta quatuor annis. Atqui Abrahamus a Noacho fuit undecimus. Semus vero duodecimum vel etiam decimum tertium cognovisset heredem; diu siquidem juxta Hebraicum calculum cum Jacobo et Esavo vixit. Adeone quis infelicis sit judicii, ut hæc contigisse existimet? Jamdiu ante Abrahamum, varia toto orbe regna erant fundata; jam dynastiæ aliquot in Egypto esse desierant quæ ab auctoribus sigillatim memorantur, nemo tamen Noachi meminit. Sane si istis temporibus inter vivos etiamnum extitisset ille universi generis humani auctor et princeps, pleni essent gentium annales de hoc miraculo. Sed nec ipse hoc pretermississet Moses.†

Nor are the inconsistencies entailed upon us by the Rabbinical computation confined to sacred history. On

* Chronol. Antiq. vol. i. p. 86—90. Origin of Pagan Idolatry, vol. i. p. 417—42[illegible]

† Vossius, De vera Etate Mundi, c. v. p. 17.

the contrary, they are felt to a still greater extent when we examine into the records of the ancient heathen nations; and they present an insuperable bar in the way of every attempt to reconcile the order of events, at that remote period, with the narrow limits assigned by chronologists to the early portion of the postdiluvian era. The annals of Egypt, of Assyria, and even of India and China, contain a long series of public facts, the existence of which we are not at liberty to question, but which cannot be reconciled to the short calculations of the present Hebrew Bible. Nay, the holy Scriptures are by the same means rendered inconsistent with themselves, and made to crowd together a multitude of occurrences which could not possibly have come to pass at the same period.* For example, we read of Nimrod, who appears to have been the youngest son of Cush, setting up a kingdom at Babylon, and establishing a tyrannical government in the extensive countries which are watered by the Euphrates and Tygris, while his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were still alive, and even in the full vigour of their age and strength. At the epoch alluded to, moreover, this aspiring chief must have been a mere stripling, a subject, too,

* Jam vero quis credat turris Babylonicæ constructionem, confusionem linguarum, ac dispersionem gentium factum esse, vix uno post diluvium elapso seculo?

Istud vero non absurdum tantum sed et stultum, et quod fieri minime potuit, octavo et quinquagesimo post diluvium anno, apud Assyrios regnasse Ninum et Semiramidem. Quotquot Judaicum sequuntur codicem hoc tempus illis adsignant. Sed si id verum est, quid sentiendum de Belo, et aliis Chaldæorum et Arabum regibus, qui quadringentis et quadraginta annis ante Ninum imperium habuere? Quid fiat de variis Egyptiorum dynastiis, quas certum est, aliquot seculis Abrahamo esse vetustiores? Quid denique statuendum de Seribus, qui vulgo Sinenses appellantur; quorum accuratissimam chronographiam si sequamur, jam diluvium septem vel octo seculis anticipabit calculum Mosaicum. De singulis inferius nonnihil dicemus. Unum hoc nunc addimus; si tempora subducamus justa receptam Hebraici codicis Scripturam, non gentium tantum historiis, sed et ipsis sacris literis meram inferri noctem.—*Voss. De vera Ætate Mundi*, c. v. pp. 18, 19.

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of Noah the great patriarchal prince; whose authority, we may presume, could not fail to be acknowledged by all the branches of his family. But the Hebrew narrative, quite at variance with these facts, ascribes to Nimrod the project of universal empire, in defiance of Noah and his sons, to whom the sovereignty of the renovated earth had fallen by Divine appointment; and who, we may justly believe, had at once the means and the inclination to assert their supremacy. All these matters, to say nothing of the rise of various comparatively powerful monarchies within the four first centuries after the flood, we must believe to be in some instances *contrary* to the parallel testimony of the Pentateuch itself, if we choose to abide by the Hebrew chronology. Hence, to use the words of Mr Faber, I have no scruple in rejecting it; if not for other more consequential reasons, yet for this palpable and direct one, that the *chronology* makes Abraham survive his father only 40 years, the *history* makes him survive him a whole century.*

9. Another consideration, which has had great weight in determining me to follow the steps of Vossius, Pezron, Hayes, Jackson, Hales, and Faber, and to adopt generally the numeration of the Septuagint and Josephus, in preference to that of the modern Hebrew, is founded upon the opinions which prevailed in the time of Christ and of his immediate followers, relative to the speedy approach of the end of the world.

The tradition that the earth, as well as the moral and religious state of its inhabitants, were to undergo a great change at the close of six thousand years, has been already mentioned; and although that impression cannot be traced

* Origin of Pagan Idolatry, vol. i. p. 419. See also Vossius, De vera Ætate Mundi, c. ix. pp. 10, 11.

to any authority which ought to receive from a Christian reader the smallest degree of respect, there is no doubt, nevertheless, that it entered deeply into the theological systems of the age which witnessed the introduction of our holy faith. We find every where the most direct and intelligible allusions to the possession which it had taken of the public mind. Both Jews and Christians spoke of themselves as having been doomed to live "in the latter days," and as being those upon whom the "ends of the world" had come. Nay, even in the apostolical writings, there are several terms employed, which, whatever might be their more recondite meaning, could not fail to strengthen, in the minds of the believers, the affecting persuasion that the end of the world was to coincide with the termination of their own lives. "For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (or go before) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord."*

St Paul, no doubt, takes pains in a subsequent Epistle to remove the apprehensions which the assurance just quoted seems to have created in the breasts of his disciples at Thessalonica; reminding them that the coming of Christ was to be preceded by a certain other event, which God, in his wise providence, still saw it right to defer. But it is plain, at the same time, that the obstacle alluded

* First Thessalonians, chap. iv. ver. 15, 16, 17.

to by the apostle was not one which could destroy their expectations of the speedy approach of the Messiah's reign upon earth, and the beginning of the happy period of a thousand years, or the Millennary Sabbath, which was to succeed the six millennary days of pain, sorrow, and death. He rather draws their attention to certain mysterious causes, which were already in operation, and about to produce the very crisis which was understood as destined by Divine wisdom to usher in the consummation of all things.*

The expressions of the same apostle, in the 15th chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, from the 23d verse and onwards, as well as the first three verses of the fifth chapter of the second Epistle, have also been understood as pointing to the commencement of that reign of the Messias upon earth, in the joys and triumphs of which the saints were to participate during a thousand years prior to the general resurrection. They that are Christ's were to rise at his coming,—the same idea that is stated in the fourth chapter of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians,—after which, the Redeemer was to exercise authority until he had put all his enemies under his feet ; and, among these, Death, the last enemy that was to be destroyed. The reader will at once perceive a resemblance between these predictions and the following sublime picture, taken from the Apocalypse, chap. xx. verse 4., &c. " And I saw the souls of them which were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection ; on such

* Second Thessalonians, chap. xi. ver. 1—9.

the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

There is little doubt, therefore, that the author of the Epistles to the Corinthians and Thessalonians, as well as the inspired writer of the Apocalypse, partook of those impressions relative to the speedy arrival of the first resurrection, and the beginning of the Messiah's reign, which prevailed among their countrymen; and I agree with Grotius, who hesitates not to state, that St Paul thought it possible that he might be alive at the time of the general judgment.*

The notion of an approaching millennium, which pervades other parts of the apostolical Epistles, cannot, we think, be properly understood without a reference to this tradition respecting the age of the world. St Peter appears to have sustained from the infidelity of his times no small degree of uneasiness on this very head; and his ears, it should seem, were not unfrequently assailed with the impious question, "Where is the promise of his coming?" His reply to these sceptical insinuations is worthy of our notice, as connected with the chronological opinions on which it is understood to rest. "Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." The sixth day was considerably advanced, but not nearly completed; and, until that millennary day had run its course, they were not to expect the "coming of the day of God," when a new heaven and a new earth were to emerge from

* "Omnino putavit Paulus fieri posse, ut ipse viverit judicii generalis tempore; idque non ex his tantum verbis satis apertis liquet, sed, et ex. 1 Cor. xv., &c."—See *Grotii Annotationes in Epistolam priorem ad Thessal. Opera*, vol. v. p. 644.

the purifying flames, and to present a scene of enjoyment and tranquillity for all the faithful servants of Christ.*

Such expectations are fully intelligible only when viewed through the medium of that chronology, according to which, as I have shown, the Christians of the apostolical age, as well as the Jews themselves at that period, were accustomed to measure the antiquity of their nation and of the human race. If examined into, on the basis of the modern Hebrew text, and the restricted computations of the Rabbins Lipman and Ben Nosen, they must appear not only absurd, but positively without any foundation whatever, either in history or in tradition. If the stream of time had only brought the world towards the close of the fourth millennium, on what ground could a people, who had been taught to expect a great change in the condition of man and of the globe at the end of six thousand years, consider themselves as existing on the very eve of that change; as living in the last days of the present mundane system; and as being destined to be witnesses and partakers of its final consummation?

Whatever may have been the precise import or extent of this persuasion, there is no doubt that it was entertained by many individuals in Judea, both while they adhered to the ritual of Moses and after they had transferred their belief to the more reasonable doctrines of Christianity; and as we know the traditional tenet on which their expectation of the end of the world was founded, we may thence conclude that, in the first age of the gospel, the Jewish chronologers were perfectly aware that the sixth millennary term of creation had made considerable progress. That the "end of all things is at hand," was an apostolical assur-

* Second Epistle of St Peter, chap. iii. ver. 2—13.

ance; and that it denoted the approach of a much more awful event than the destruction of Jerusalem, is allowed by the most judicious commentators on this passage of holy Scripture. That it had a reference to the expected manifestations of Divine power, in changing the features of the globe, as well as the religious condition of mankind, will not be denied by those who have carefully studied this remarkable prediction, in connexion with the hereditary opinions and feelings which, at that period, occupied the mind of almost every descendant of Abraham.*

It is a remarkable fact, mentioned by several historians of the church, that an opinion prevailed in the first ages of Christianity which identified Nero with Antichrist, the great enemy of the gospel. The cruelties which he had exercised upon the unoffending disciples made so deep an impression on their minds, that they not unnaturally regarded him as that monster of ungodliness who was to be permitted by Divine Providence to wage war with the followers of the Messiah, and who was to be finally destroyed by the just indignation of that servant of God. The death of the Roman tyrant did not at once put an end to this hypothesis among the faithful. Various rumours were propagated that the son of Agrippina was still alive; that he was about to appear again at Rome, and assume the imperial authority; and that he was to be reserved on earth to witness the triumph of the religion which he had persecuted, as well as to receive from the hands of its heavenly Founder the recompense due to his atrocious crimes.†

It belongs not to a work of this nature to obviate such objections against the soundness of the inference which we

* On this interesting topic the theological reader will find much learned discussion in the volumes of Grotius, Lightfoot, Hammond, and Whitby, *in loco.*

† Crevier Histoire des Empereurs Romains, et Tillemont, under the reign of Nero.

are now endeavouring to establish, as might be raised upon the assumed infallibility of the apostles, in regard to their knowledge of the Divine purposes. No theologian has ever maintained, that to these inspired messengers of Christ a degree of information was vouchsafed respecting the intentions of the Deity, greater than had been conferred upon their Master himself, when clothed with the character of our Mediator; and, as is well known, he distinctly declared, that the limits of his commission did not admit of any revelation as to the period fixed in the councils of Eternity for the duration of the present state of things. The Holy Spirit brought to the remembrance of the disciples all things of religious importance; and more especially whatsoever they had seen or been taught in relation to those great facts and doctrines on which the foundations of Christianity are laid: but, in reference to future events, we perceive no evidence to justify the opinion, that these chosen servants of the Redeemer enjoyed views in any degree more vivid or extensive than such as might have arisen from their natural penetration, aided by a careful inquiry into the writings of the Old Testament.

We find, for example, that, in matters which respected his personal concerns, and even his services in the gospel, St Paul, when he had no special revelation communicated to him, wrote from those impressions of probability and even of inclination, which, in ordinary circumstances, lead the mind to anticipate the scene towards which the course of events, or the calls of duty, are the most likely to guide its exertions; and we know, that, on more occasions than one, his prospects on this head were not realized. Nor has it ever been denied, that all the apostles were accustomed to mix with their inspired doctrines opinions and illustrations, at least, which they had derived from mere human learning or local tradition; and hence every interpreter of

Scripture thinks himself warranted in making a distinction between the articles of faith which were delivered by St Peter or St Paul, and the accompaniments, so to call them, of historical allusion and Rabbinical commentary, by means of which these doctrines may appear to have been recommended to the particular notions and modes of thinking which prevailed among the Jews.

Claiming more for the apostles than they ever claimed for themselves, in respect to the knowledge of futurity and the hidden purposes of the Divine mind, some commentators have asserted that St Peter could not, by the description which he gives in the third chapter of his second epistle, intend to denote the circumstances which are to render so solemn the close of this earthly scene; but merely the consternation and sufferings which were to accompany the Roman arms in their last attack on the capital of Judea. This opinion, much more respectable for its object than for its correctness or consistency, rests entirely on the fact, that the siege of Jerusalem took place three or four years after the epistle was written,* whereas the end of the world has not yet arrived; and because the apostle spoke of the event to which his description applied, as being at hand, and as being presently looked for by those whom he addressed, it is concluded, that he must have meant the demolition of the holy city, and not the return of Christ to receive his saints to glory. To such as may be inclined to adopt this view of a very mysterious subject, I take leave to recommend an attentive consideration of the following remarks by Dr Whitby.

"I am constrained to dissent from the opinion of the revered and judicious Dr Hammond and Dr Lightfoot, who conceive that the apostle doth not discourse of our

* Grotius maintains that it was written after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Lord's coming to the general judgment, in his third chapter, but only of his coming to execute his judgment on the Jews, by the destruction of Jerusalem. For, not to insist upon this consideration, that this opinion is wholly new, and contrary to the judgment of all the ancients who own this epistle, and have occasion to make mention of these words, they all agreeing in this with Œcomenius, that the apostle speaketh ἐπι συντελια του αἰῶνος, *of the end of the world*, it is extremely evident,

" 1st, From these very words, verse 7. ' But the heavens and earth that now are, by the same word, are kept in store, reserved to fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.' And verse 10, ' But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.' To interpret all these words, only of the destruction of Jerusalem, is to turn them into metaphor and allegory; whereas St Peter plainly says, that as the old world was destroyed by water, so shall the world that now is be destroyed by fire. Here, then, is no room for allegories, or allegorical expositions; for as the heavens and earth were destroyed by water, so are they to be destroyed by fire; and if, in the first place, you understand the natural material world, you must also understand it in the second; they are both allegories, or neither.

" 2d, Here the apostle speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened 37 years after the death of Christ, and was, according to our Lord's prediction, to fall out whilst some of those whom he spake to were yet living, what need was there of saying, *One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*, when he was speaking, it seems, of that which he knew

was to happen before four years were expired? And, lastly, the solemn exhortation, *Seeing then all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, that we may be found of him without spot and blameless.* This, I say, sounds too high for the destruction of Jerusalem, in which they of Pontus and Galatia could not be much concerned; but it is an exhortation very proper for those who had the lively idea of the conflagration of the world, and the tremendous judgment and perdition of ungodly men, then set before them."

As this inquiry is of great importance with the view of fixing the opinions of the early Christians as to the duration of the world, the reader is requested to extend his indulgence to the following observations, which, it is hoped, will throw some light on certain forms of speech which were in common use among the first converts to our holy religion.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, in language which partakes at once of allegory and spiritual mysticism, contains, it has been thought, a manifest reference to the rest or Sabbath which was in reserve for the people of God; founded, too, upon the notice recorded by the sacred historian, that, after the six days of creation, the Almighty reposed from his labour. We who believe, says the inspired writer, are entering into that tranquil and happy state which is one of the great objects of our faith. We are approaching to it, (εἰσερχόμεθα); and whoever is admitted to participate in the delights of this Sabbath (σαββατισμος) rests from his toils, as God did from his in the beginning of time. As the Omnipotent exerted his creative power during six days, and paused on the seventh, so we, in like manner, who believe in Christ, shall be refreshed with the

felicities of the seventh millennium, which is to succeed the six thousand years of toil and pain. But faith is indispensable to this glorious consummation; wherefore let us hold fast the profession of our faith (for he is faithful that hath promised this reign of peace and joy); and let us be always in readiness, assembled together, and encouraging one another; and this so much the more earnestly, as we see the day which is to crown all our expectations now rapidly approaching.*

In the works of Clement and Barnabas, we find several unquestionable proofs, that the opinion now stated was derived by these holy men from their apostolical companions and teachers. The latter, for example, who has been described as the first depository of the doctrine of St Paul,† and who is in many places to be regarded as his interpreter, presents to us, in a commentary on the 20th chapter of Exodus, the following views of the mystical meaning of the word Sabbath:—"*And God made in six days the works of his hands; and he finished them on the seventh day, and he rested on the seventh day and sanctified it.* Consider, my children, what that signifies, *he finished them in six days.* The meaning of it is this, that in six thousand years the Lord God will bring all things to an end; for with him one day is a thousand years, as himself testifieth, saying, (Psalm xc. 4.) *Behold this day shall be as a thousand years.* Therefore, children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, shall all things be accomplished. And what is that he saith, *And he rested the seventh day?* He meaneth this, that when his Son shall come and abolish the season of the wicked one, and judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun, and the moon, and the stars, then he shall rest gloriously on that seventh day.

* Heb. iv. 3—10., and x. 24, 25. † Defense de l'Antiquité, p. 9.

Behold, then, he will truly sanctify it with blessed rest, when we (having received the righteous promise, when iniquity shall be no more, all things being renewed by the Lord) shall be able to sanctify it, being ourselves first made holy."*

The same notion may be traced in the works of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and St Cyprian; the last of whom, in the preface to his tract *De Exhortatione Martyrii*, reminds his readers that they were "now in the end and completion of the world, and that the fatal times of Antichrist were at hand." He adds, that "six thousand years were already almost accomplished since the devil made his first assault on man; and that the evil spirit, from his long practice, had learned all the arts of temptation, and all the wiles by which the human being could most effectually be deprived of faith and virtue."†

Nor was the opinion which is here stated as having been entertained by Justin, Tertullian, and St Cyprian, confined to these learned fathers; on the contrary, it was maintained by several other of the distinguished writers who adorned those early ages of our faith, and especially by Hesychius, Timotheus, Theophilus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, and Ambrose. The first of the ancients now named, and who is supposed to have been a contemporary of St Jerome, states, in a discourse which he has left on the birth of Christ, that, agreeably to the doctrine of the church of Antioch, the incarnation of the

* Catholic Epistle of St Barnabas, section xv. Wake's translation. See also Clem. Epis. ad Corinthios, and Herm. Past. lib. iii. Similitud. 9.

† Quoniam persecutionum et pressurarum pondus incumbit, et in fine atque in consummatione mundi, Antichristi tempus infestum appropinquare nunc cœpit. Adversarius vetus est, et hostis antiquus, cum quo prœlium gerimus. Sex millia annorum pene (alii legunt *plene*) complentur ex quo hominem Diabolus impugnat. Omnia genera tentandi, et artes atque insidias dejiciendi usu ipsovetustatis edidicit.

Redeemer took place nearly six thousand years from the foundation of the world. From Adam to the patriarch Phaleg, the son of Eber, he remarks, were three thousand years; and from the same era to the forty-second year of Augustus, there passed five thousand nine hundred and sixty-seven years; so that, including the thirty-three years during which our Saviour sojourned among men, the whole interval from the creation to the death of that divine person, was exactly six thousand years.*

Origen, in one of his dialogues, asserts against a heretical Marcionite, that our Lord descended from heaven for the salvation of man, six thousand years after the Almighty had formed the first of the human race.† And Hippolytus, who flourished likewise in the beginning of the third century, warns his flock that the time of Antichrist could not be far distant, as six thousand years from the creation of the world had already passed away, ὡσανει των ἀπο πρωτης του κοσμου καταβολης ἑξακισχιλιων ἐτων συντελουμενων.‡

Ambrose, in his exposition of the gospel of St Luke, shows that he also had adopted the conclusions of his age relative to the duration of the world; for, when commenting on the transfiguration of the Redeemer, he lays a considerable emphasis on the statement of St Matthew, who observes, that *after six days, he taketh Peter, James, and John, up into a high mountain apart.* In regard to this notice, says the venerable father, we may remark, that *it was after six thousand years; for a thousand years are in the sight of the Lord as one day. But now more than six thousand years are counted,* namely, from the foundation of the world.

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* Hesychius, Homil. in Natal. apud Cangium in Chron. Paschal, as quoted by Pezron, Defense, p. 15.

† Origen, Dialog. contra Marcionitas. ‡ Hippolyt. apud Photium.

In a word, it has been established by a very patient and learned research into Christian antiquity, on the part of the authors to whom I have referred, that, prior to the close of the second century, there is no writer to be found who did not inherit the opinions which prevailed in the times of the Apostles and of their immediate disciples, relative to the interval which had elapsed between Adam and Christ. In the following century, indeed, e begin to perceive symptoms of change in the leading systems of chronology, and an attempt to accommodate the authority of tradition to the actual state of things. The expected millennium seemed to be delayed; and it, therefore, became necessary to examine more attentively into the language of Scripture, and to calculate with greater precision the several epochs which are recorded in the inspired annals of the Jewish church. Julius Africanus, accordingly, who wrote about the year 221 of our era, is the first who reduced the period stated above to 5500 years,—a conclusion which appears to have been readily received by nearly all the learned Christians of his day, particularly in the provinces of Greece and Asia Minor.*

Lactantius, who flourished early in the fourth century, proved himself, in the department of chronology at least, an implicit follower of Julius. In the seventh of his Divine Institutions, he ventured to teach, according to the doctrine of the Jews, that the world, in its present form, was not to subsist beyond six thousand years; but that, after the term now mentioned, the human race was doomed to witness the consummation of all earthly things, and the commencement of a new order of moral and intellectual natures. He adds, that those who have devoted themselves to the science of time, have ascertained with

* Syncel. Chronographia, p. 107 and 212.

sufficient accuracy when this renovation is to take place; guiding their inquiries by the knowledge which is presented to them in the holy books and other historical records of former ages, wherein is contained the number of years assigned for the duration of the globe. He admitted, indeed, that there appeared some diversity in the sentiments of the ablest writers on this subject; but, upon the whole, he thought himself justified in pronouncing that the earth as now constituted was not to last more than two hundred years. Quando tamen compleatur hæc summa (6000 ann.) docent ii qui de temporibus scripserunt, colligentes ex litteris sacris et ex variis historiis, quantus sit numerus annorum ab exordio mundi. Qui licet varient, et aliquantum numeri eorum summa dissentiat; omnis tamen expectatio non amplius quam ducentorum videtur annorum.*

In this computation, the learned tutor of the son of Constantine proceeds on the fact, proved or assumed by Julius Africanus, that the world had existed 5500 years before the incarnation of Christ; and as, from the birth of our Lord to the period at which the Divine Institutions were composed, there intervened a space of 320 years,—5820 in all, from the creation,—the remainder, 180, may be regarded as justifying the round number of 200 used by Lactantius, as completing the full period measured out by Divine Providence for the duration of this earthly abode.

It is worthy of remark, that the calculation of Julius the African retained its authority among the oriental Christians, at least till the close of the seventh century; for we find in the records of a synod held in the capital of the eastern empire, in the year 691, that the fathers of the church continued to adjust their dates by a reference to his system. The acts of that celebrated convoca-

* Lact. lib. vii. Divin. Institut. num. 25.

tion distinguished by the appellation of *Synodus in Trullo*, bear that its members assembled in the imperial city of Constantinople, in the year of the world 6199, coinciding with the year of our Lord 691; for, if from 6199 there be deducted 5508, (the number which, on a certain principle, had been substituted for 5500,) there will remain the difference of 691, the year in which the council was actually convened.

Eusebius, the bishop of Cæsarea, who lived at the same time with Lactantius, thought proper to diminish the period between the creation and the era of redemption to 5200,—a result which was adopted by many of the western churches, but resolutely opposed by those of the Lesser Asia, Arabia, and Egypt. We find, that in the days of Abul Pharagius, who wrote his History of the Dynasties towards the end of the thirteenth century, no change had been introduced in the ancient chronology. From the beginning of the world to the Messiah, says he, according to the computation of the Law (of Moses) in the Septuagint version, which is in the hands of the Greeks, and of the other Christian sects (the Syrians excepted) the number of years is about five thousand five hundred and eighty-six.* But it is still more remarkable, that the same principle of computation continues in use among the Greeks, Copts, Abyssinians, Armenians, Ethiopians, and Georgians, even at the present day. The Russians, too, who received their religion from the Greek Christians about the end of the tenth century, retain still, or at least, did retain, at a recent period, the chronological positions with which its early history is associated. As a remarkable

* Ab initio mundi usque ad Meshiam—secundum computum legis ex versione Septuaginta, quæ in manibus Græcorum est, et reliquarum sectarum Christianorum (exceptis Syris), anni sunt fere quinquies mille quingenti octaginta sex.—*Abul Pharag. Hist. Dynast.*, vii.

instance of this fact, we may mention, that the election of the prince Demetrius, which was effected under the auspices of the grand duke, John Basil, his uncle, and is recorded by the Muscovite historians, as having occurred in the year of the world 7006, is known to have taken place in the year of Christ 1497. Now, if from the former of these two sums we take the latter, we shall find that the northern disciples of the Greek church, as well as those in Egypt, Georgia, and Abyssinia, follow the numeration of the Septuagint, as the basis of all their chronological calculations.

It has been already stated, that the western church gave a preference to the computation of Eusebius, who reduced the interval between the creation and the nativity of our Lord to 5200 years. This determination, on the part of the Latins, may be traced to the following circumstance. St Jerome, it is well known, undertook to translate into the language of Italy, the celebrated Chronicon of the Bishop of Cæsarea, and to write a continuation of it down to his own time, being about the year 378; and as this Father rose into high esteem among the clergy of the Roman communion, he had influence sufficient to recommend to their approbation the chronological system upon which his industry had been so long employed. Hence we are enabled to account for the small discrepancy which appears in the dates followed by Christian authors, as they happened to write on the eastern or on the western shores of the Adriatic. The Greeks adhered to the numbers of Julius Africanus, while the Latins thought themselves nearer the truth in tracing the steps of St Jerome and Eusebius.

This current of opinion as to the age of the world, continued uniform, during several centuries, over the whole Christian church. Augustin, it is true, departed so far

from the authority of Jerome, as to introduce into the line of the postdiluvian patriarchs the name of the second Cainan, and thereby to add to the period from the flood to Abraham not less than 130 years; and consequently extending the time from Adam to Christ to 5330. But his views, it is obvious, were all along regulated by the principles which seem to have determined the limits of all chronological inquiry in those early ages: for even in the beginning of the fifth century, the date at which he lived, we find him using the very same language which filled the mouths of the Christians, while as yet the Apostles and their companions were upon the earth, and assuring his auditors that the sixth millennium was already far advanced, and that at the close of it a great change awaited the mortal condition of man.* He opposes himself to those who maintained what he esteemed heretical notions on the history of the cosmogony, reminding the pious persons whom he addressed, that "from the first man, who was called Adam, six thousand years were not yet completed;" and declaring that the writers who denied this certain and unquestionable truth deserved not to be reasoned with, but to be treated with contempt.† According to the views which this father held, about three-fourths of the sixth millennary age of the world must, in his time, have been exhausted; for if to 5200, the era of the nativity, we add 130 for the generation of Cainan, and 420 for the period at which Augustin may be supposed to have written his Divine Commonwealth, the total sum

* August. De Civit. Dei, lib. xx. c. 7.—In sexto annorum milliario, tanquam sexto die, cujus nunc spatia superiora volvuntur.

† Idem, lib. xviii. c. 40.—Ab ipso primo homine, qui est appellatus Adam, nondum sex millia annorum compleantur, quomodo non isti ridendi potius quam refellendi sunt, qui de spatio temporum tam diversa, et huic exploratæ veritati tam contraria persuadere conantur.

will amount to 5750 years, reckoning from the creation. His expression therefore becomes perfectly intelligible, that he lived "in sexto annorum milliario, cujus nunc spatia superiora volvuntur."

The African bishop was followed in the path of chronology by his pupils, Paulus Orosus and Prosper Aquitanus; the former of whom, at the desire of the learned prelate, wrote a history of the world; while the latter not only continued the chronicle of Eusebius, from the date at which it was left by Jerome, but also compiled a similar work of his own, which was afterwards introduced in the paschal canon of Victorius.*

These authors were succeeded by Gregory of Tours, Isidorus archbishop of Seville, by Paul the Deacon, by Ninius, by Martinus Polonus, by Matthæus Palmerius, by Joannes Nauclerus, and other distinguished writers; all of whom adopted the chronology of the Septuagint, and supported the ancient opinion, that the Saviour of mankind was born in the course of the sixth millennium.

It was not, indeed, till the eighth century, that the notions of the Masorite Jews found any acceptance in the Christian church. About the year 720, the Venerable Bede produced his works *De Temporum Ratione*, *De Sex Ætatibus Mundi*, and *De Temporibus, ad intelligendam supputationem temporum Sacræ Scripturæ;* in which he assigned at considerable length the reasons upon which he had decided in preferring the Hebrew verity to the translation of the Seventy. But the innovations of the monk of Durham were ill received by his contemporaries. He was denounced as a heretic, because he had taken

* See Oros. Hist. lib. i. c. 1., and lib. vii. c. 23.—Prosper in Continuatione Chron. Euseb. et in Chron. Maj. Victorius, Præf. ad Canonem Paschalem.

upon him to assert, in opposition to all the fathers of the church, that the Redeemer of our race was not born in the sixth millennium of the world.

The darkness of the succeeding ages prevents us from pursuing the progress of this opinion among the churchmen of the west. It is not improbable that the weight of Bede's name and erudition secured for him a number of followers, at a period when authority prevailed more than patient research in determining the judgment of the priesthood. Upon the revival of learning, as we have found, the discussion was renewed with that vigour and freedom which characterized the second birth of intellect and taste; and soon called into the field of controversy the powerful talents of Scaliger, Petavius, Vossius, Pezron, and Usher.

It has not escaped observation, that the prejudices against the Roman church, which animated the disciples of Luther, were allowed to mix deeply with their investigations into this intricate science. The Protestants, aware that the Papal communion followed the computation of the Septuagint, exerted all their learning in order to prove that the chronology of the Hebrew Bible possessed a higher authority than could be claimed for the most approved version of the Scriptures; and, overlooking the convincing evidence which is supplied by the writings of the ancient Jews, as well as of the Christian fathers during the four first centuries, they took part with the Talmudists and modern Rabbis, against both the eastern and the western churches; and maintained that the Messias appeared upon earth at the end of the fourth millennary age.

But we must not pursue these inquiries to any greater length. It has been rendered manifest, I think, that both Jews and Christians, in the apostolic age, believed that nearly six thousand years had elapsed from the crea-

tion of the world; that a remarkable change was expected soon to take place in the moral and religious state of the human race; and that all the systems of chronology in those early times bore a decided reference to this expectation. It has been shown, that the Christian writers, without exception, for several hundred years, adhered to the ancient computation; and that no difference of opinion appeared amongst them, till they began to devote themselves to Jewish literature, and resign their judgment to the mysteries and traditions of the Rabbinical school.

From the considerations now stated, it must, no doubt, have appeared extremely probable, that the alterations which took place in the Jewish chronology, during the second age of our religion, were introduced into the Hebrew text and not into the Greek. The reasons adduced in support of this conclusion receive additional strength from the fact maintained by several distinguished authors, that the period in question, about 130 years after Christ, was fixed upon by the Jews for substituting in their sacred writings, the Chaldaic letters instead of the ancient Samaritan.* On such an occasion, there would be little difficulty in effecting whatever innovations the sanhedrim of Tiberias might deem expedient; and this the more easily, because the old language of Scripture had already become obsolete among the great body of the people in Judea, whom habit or necessity had long reconciled to the use of Greek, or of the mixed Syriac, the vernacular tongue of Palestine.

That similar changes in the chronology of the Septuagint took place at a later period is neither denied nor meant to be concealed. The various discrepancies betwee

* Jackson's Chron. Antiq. vol. i. p. 113.; Schultens, Instit. ad Fund. Ling. Hebr.; Relandi Dissertat. de num. Samar.; and Calmet's Dissertation sur les Monnoies des Hebreux.

the original and the version, which began to attract attention about the time of Origen, created among biblical scholars much perplexity and uneasiness; and as the Hebrew presented higher claims to veneration and accuracy than the work of uninspired translators, it is not surprising that even the Christians should have occasionally consented to correct their Greek copies upon a collation of the dates and numbers in the primitive record. The labours of the Tetrapla and Hexapla too, while they proved this fact, contributed to darken the progress of biblical criticism in later times; because Origen, in many instances, appeared ready to restore the harmony of Scripture by tampering with the text of the Septuagint. Even the works of Josephus have suffered extensive vitiations at the hands of commentators and chronologists; who, not being inclined to suspect the honesty of the Rabbis, have too readily reduced his computations to the standard of the Masorite editions of the Hebrew Bible. It is, therefore, to the researches of a more recent period that we owe the clearer light which is now thrown upon the antiquity of the human race, and even on the history of the chosen people themselves; and this desirable end has been accomplished, not by the means of ingenious hypotheses, nor from any reliance upon geological theories, but by a patient examination of ancient authors, Heathen, Jewish, and Christian, who are known to have derived the substance of their narrative from the books of Moses and of the prophets, at a time when these divine authorities were still uncontaminated by Rabbinical innovation. To use the language of Isaac Vossius, we attempt not to found a new chronology, but to restore a system which in former days was rashly and ignorantly discarded; and I am satisfied that we shall thereby not only serve the cause of truth, but remove a stumbling-block out of the way of many serious inquir-

ers, who have been perplexed by inconsistencies inseparable from the calculations of the modern Hebrew text, and unable to reconcile the facts of ancient history with the fidelity of the sacred writings.

"Ut vero ad nostrum revertamur institutum, unum hoc antequam desinam adjiciam, nos non hic novam condere chronologiam, sed veterem temere abrogatam reducere. Quod si qui iis quæ adtulimus argumentis et testimoniis non adquiescant, amplectantur illi hodiernum Judæorum calculum absque ratione, ac utantur ingenio suo prout libuerit. Sciant tamen quod sic sentiendo non veritati tamen fucus fiat, sed et tutissima improbis porta aperiatur ad impugnandam sacrarum literarum fidem, ac vel apud æquos judices de bonis et piis triumphandi. Ut itaque veritati satisfiat, ac impiis os obtundatur, addantur ad receptam mundi ætatem anni 1440, jam nulla supererit difficultas."—*De Vera Ætate Mundi*, p. 55.

Section IV.

Having laid before the reader an outline of the arguments on which is founded my preference of the chronology derived from the Septuagint and Josephus, as compared with the abbreviated epochs of the modern Jews, I now proceed to define the limits of that particular period with which we are more immediately concerned; namely, the interval which elapsed between the exode from Egypt and the building of Solomon's temple.

I have already mentioned, in general terms, the difference of opinion which subsists among the ablest writers, both of ancient and modern times, in regard to the number of years during which the government of the Hebrews was exercised by the judges. Leaving out of view the high computations of Julius Africanus and Syncellus, the reader

must have observed, that even between Jackson and Hales there is a disagreement of not less than forty-one years, applicable to the historical events which occurred after the division of the conquered lands, and before the reign of David. The last of these authors has attempted to demonstrate the accuracy of his calculation by an ingenious process, of which I now proceed to give the outline.

Josephus, in the tenth book of his Antiquities, narrates, that, between the exode and the destruction of the first temple, there was a period of 1062 years; and, in the sixth book of his Jewish War, the same writer remarks, that, from the capture of Jebus by David, in the eighth year of his reign, to the event last mentioned, the interval extended to 477 years. Now, says Dr Hales, if from 1062 we subtract 477, the remainder, 585, will give the number of years which intervened between the exode and the reduction of Jebus; and if to these years we add 33 for the residue of David's reign, and the three first years of Solomon's, 36 in all, we shall obtain the genuine number of 621 years as the true extent of the period which elapsed between the departure from Egypt and the foundation of the temple at Jerusalem.

But this computation, however plausible it may look, is far from being accurate. It has no better foundation than an apparent ambiguity in the language used by Josephus, which, to an ignorant or hasty reader, may seem to bear a reference to the warlike exploit recorded of the second king of Israel; whereas, in fact, it denotes very clearly the end of that monarch's reign. The words of the historian are as follows:—Τον μὲν δὴ των Χαναναιων̃ λαον εκβαλὼν ὁ των Ιουδαιων Βασιλευς Δαυιδης, κατοικιζει τον ἰδιον· Και μετ' αυτον ἔτεσι τετρακοσιοις ἑβδομηκοντα και ἑπτα, μησιν ἑξ, ὑπο Βαβυλωνιων̃ κατασκαπτεται; which are sufficiently well translated by Whiston in these terms: "David, the king of the Jews, ejected the Cha-

nanites and settled his own people therein (Jerusalem); and it was demolished entirely by the Babylonians four hundred and seventy-seven years and six months *after him.*"

It is somewhat surprising, that Dr Hales should have understood the phrase μετ' αυτον as applying to the reduction of Salem; more especially as, according to the numbers of Josephus, the space of time, from the eighth year of David to the destruction of the temple by the Babylonians, would have greatly exceeded four hundred and seventy-seven years. Including thirty-three years for the remainder of that sovereign's life, and eighty years for the reign of Solomon, (which is the number of Josephus) we shall have, from the taking of Jebus down to the eleventh year of Zedekiah, no less a sum than five hundred and seventeen years. I am, indeed, perfectly aware, that the reign of the son of David is usually limited to one half the amount of what has just been stated; but it must be acknowledged, in return, that, in the period of 477 years preceding the demolition of the temple, as mentioned by Josephus, the eighty years assigned to Solomon were comprehended; whence it necessarily follows, that the said period could not begin at an earlier date than the demise of David. In short, the 477 years mentioned by the Jewish historian cannot be reckoned from the taking of Jebus, but from the death of the royal warrior by whom that achievement was performed.

But instead of entering into a tedious discussion in regard to the opinions of modern chronologers on this obscure portion of sacred history, I shall lay before the reader, in the form of tables, the results in which their researches have terminated, according to the different hypotheses on which they severally proceeded.

TABLE IV.

FROM THE EXODE TO THE FOUNDATION OF THE TEMPLE, ACCORDING TO JOSEPHUS, A. D. 96.*

	Years.
From exode to death of Moses,	40
From death of Moses to that of Joshua,	25
The government of the elders after Joshua, in whose time the Israelites were subjects to the king of Mesopotamia eight years,	18
Othniel,	40
Subjection to the Moabites,	18
Ehud delivered them, and was judge,	80
Shamgar succeeded Ehud, but died in the first year of his government,	1
Servitude under Jabin, king of Canaan,	20
Deborah and Barak delivered them, and were judges,	40
Servitude under the Madianites,	7
Gideon delivered them, and was judge,	40
Abimelech ruled,	3
After him Tola judged Israel,	22†
After Tola, Jair was judge,	22
Servitude under Philistines and Ammonites,	18
Jephtha delivered them, and was judge,	6
Ibzan was judge,	7
After Ibzan, Elon was judge,	10‡

* Antiquities of the Jews, book v. chap. 1—10.

† This judge has been omitted by the carelessness of a translator; but the amount of years reckoned by Josephus from the exode to foundation of temple, proves that Tola and the period of his government must have been originally comprehended in the pages of the historian.

‡ According to Josephus, Abdon was judge at the same time with Elon, and therefore no separate period is allowed for the government of the former. Some of the manuscript copies of this historian, indeed, represent

	Years.
Servitude under Philistines,	40
Samson judged Israel,	20
Eli, the high priest, was judge,	40
After the death of Eli, Samuel alone judged Israel,	12
Samuel judged 18 years more in the reign of Saul,	18
Saul two years after death of Samuel,	2
David reigned,	40
In the fourth year of Solomon, the temple was founded,	3
Sum,	592

TABLE V.

THE SAME PERIOD ACCORDING TO THEOPHILUS, BISHOP OF ANTIOCH, A. D. 330.*

	Years.
From exode to death of Moses,	40
Joshua,	27
Servitude under king of Mesopotamia,	8
Othniel,	40
Servitude under Moabites,	18
Ehud,	80
Shamgar,	1†
Servitude under Canaanites,	20
Deborah and Barak,	40
Servitude under Madianites,	7

Abdon as succeeding Elon; he governed, μετ' Ηλῶνα, say they; but as no years are reckoned for his administration, Mr Jackson prefers the reading of the Basil and Geneva copies, which have μετα Ηλῶν or Ηλωνος, that is, *with Elon*, instead of *after* him.

* See Epist. ad Autolycum, lib. iii.

† Shamgar is misplaced in the chronology of Theophilus, being omitted in the proper succession, and introduced after Samson and the Interregnum.

	Years.
Gideon,	40
Abimelech,	3
Tola,	22
Jair,	22
Servitude under Ammonites,	18
Jephthah,	6
Ibzan,	7
Elon,	10
Abdon,	8
Servitude under Philistines,	40
Samson,	20
Interregnum,	40
Eli,	20
Samuel,	12
Saul,	20
David,	40
Solomon,	3
Sum,	612

The excess in this table amounts to 20 years exactly; which may be detected either in the government of Samson, as distinct from the Philistine servitude, or in the following interregnum, which not only occupies a wrong place, being before Eli instead of after him, but is also 20 years too long. On the other hand, the administration of Saul is too short by the same amount; so that it is only necessary to subtract one of the sums of 20 years from the full period assigned by Theophilus, in order to make his views coincide with those of Josephus: $612 - 20 = 592$.

TABLE VI.

THE SAME, ACCORDING TO EUSEBIUS, BISHOP OF CÆSAREA, A. D. 330.

Extracted from his Præparatio Evangelica, lib. x. c. 14.

	Years.
Moses,	40
Joshua,	27
Servitude, Mesopot.	8
Othniel,	40
Eglon, (servitude)	18
Ehud,	80
Shamgar omitted,	—
Jabin, (servitude)	20
Deborah and Barak,	40
Madianites, (servitude)	7
Gideon,	40
Abimelech,	3
Tola,	23
Jair,	22
Ammonites, (servitude)	18
Jephthah,	6
Ibzan,	7
Elon,	10*
Abdon, written Labdon by Eusebius,	8
Philistines, (servitude)	40

* Eusebius, in his Chronicon, remarks, that Elon is omitted in the Septuagint; an observation which must have applied only to his own copy, as the name of that judge is to be found in the most ancient manuscripts and editions. He informs his readers, too, that some chronologers gave 30 years to Joshua, and that the Septuagint assigned 50 to Othniel; in both which cases he follows the Hebrew. He adds, that the Greek text gives only 20 years to the government of Eli; he adopts the larger number 40.

	Years.
Samson,	20
Eli,	40
Samuel and Saul,	40
David,	40
Solomon,	3
	600

The sum of Eusebius is just 8 years too great, and may be easily corrected by deducting the 20 years of Samson's government, (which ought to be included in the time of the Philistine domination,) and by afterwards adding 12 years for the individual rule of Samuel, who is said to have judged Israel so many years without a colleague: 600 — 20 + 12 = 592.

TABLE VII.

THE SAME, ACCORDING TO PETAVIUS, A. D. 1633.

Extracted from the Rationarium Temporum, vol. ii. p. 76.

		Anni.
	Moses,	40
	Josue,	14
	Seniores,	10
1	Servitus Mesopot.	8
	Othoniel,	40
2	Servitus Moabitica,	18
	Aod,	80
3	Servitus Chananæa,	20
	Debora,	40
4	Servitus Madianitica,	7
	Gideon,	40

		Anni.
	Abimelech,	3
	Thola,	23
	Jair,	22
5	Servitus Ammonitica,	0
	Jephthe,	6
	Abesan,	7
	Abialon,	10
	Abdon,	8
6	Servitus sub Philistæis,	0
	Samson,	20
	Samuel et Saul,	40
	David,	40
	Solomon,	3
		520

The deficiency in Petavius arises from his omission of the sixth servitude extending to 40 years, of the 20 years of Eli's administration after the death of Samson, and of the 12 years during which Samuel judged Israel before the reign of Saul. The result will be $520+40+20+12=592$.

TABLE VIII.

THE SAME, ACCORDING TO USHER, A. D. 1650.

Extracted from his Chronologia Sacra, p. 71.

		Anni.
I.	Ab exitu Israelitarum ex Ægypto usque ad transitum ab eis Jordanem,	40
II.	Inde ad finita bella, et quietem terræ per Josuam datam,	6.4m.

	Anni.
III. Inde ad quietem per Othnielem (debellato Cushane Mesopotamiæ rege) terræ restitutam,	40
IV. Inde ad quietem per Ehudem (occiso Eglone Moabitarum rege) terræ restitutam,	80
V. Inde ad quietem per Deboram et Barak (profligato Jabinis regis Chananæorum exercitu) terræ restitutam,	40
VI. Inde ad quietem per Gideonem (Midianitis devictis) terræ restitutam,	40
VII. Inde ad initium regni Abimelechi filii Gideonis,	9.2[m].
VIII. Abimelechi, Tolæ et Jairis,	48
IX. Jephthæ,	6
X. Ibsanis, Elonis et Abdonis,	25
XI. Eli et Sampsonis,	40
XII. Samuelis,	21
XIII. Saulis regis,	40
XIV. A morte Saulis ad jacta fundamenta templi Salomonici,	43
Summa ann.	478.6

I reserve such observations as this table may have suggested, until I have transcribed some other lists drawn up by later chronologers.

TABLE IX.

THE SAME, ACCORDING TO CAPELLUS, A. D. 1655.

Extracted from his Chronologia Sacra, p. 140.

	Anni.
Ingressus Israelitarum in terram Chanaan,	41
Bella in ea gesta sunt per sexennium,	6

	Anni.
Κληρουχια terræ annum unum duravit,	1
Oppressio Israelitarum per Chusan,	8
Hothniel primus judicum, obiit,	40
Oppressio per Eglon, sive Moabitas,	18
Ahod, mortuus est,	80
Samgar,	—
Oppressio per Jabin, sive Chananæos,	20
Debora, et Barac, obiit,	40
Oppressio Madianitarum,	7
Gideon, obiit,	40
Abimelech, obit,	3
Tholah, obit,	23
Jair, obit,	22
Ammonitarum oppressio,	18
Jephte, obit,	6
Ibtsan, obit,	7
Elon, obit,	10
Habdon, obit,	8
Philistinorum oppressio,	40
Samson, obit,	20
Heli, obiit,	40
Samuel, et Saul, mortuus est,	40
David, mortuus est,	40
Templum extrui cœptum est, an. 4to Solomonis,	3
	580

The errors in the above table may be corrected by adding 20 years for Joshua and the elders, and 12 for the government of Samuel; from the sum of which 20 years must be deducted, as the excess of Eli's administration after the demise of Samson. The following notation will render this amendment intelligible: $580+20+12=612$: and $612-20=592$.

TABLE X.

THE SAME PERIOD, ACCORDING TO JACKSON. 1752.

Taken from his Chronological Antiquities, p. 145.

	Years.	B. C.
From exode to the death of Moses, -	40	1593
Joshua 25, and an interregnum two years,	27	1553
First servitude under Chusan Rishathaim,	8	1526
After this *Othniel* was judge, -	40	1518
Second servitude under the Moabites,	18	1478
After this *Ehud* was judge, -	80	1460
Shamgar was judge almost a year, reckoned in the years of Ehud, -	—	—
Third servitude under the Canaanites,	20	1380
After this *Deborah* and *Barak*,	40	1360
Fourth servitude under the Madianites,	7	1320
After this *Gideon* was judge, -	40	1313
After *Gideon*, *Abimelech* was judge,	3	*1273*
After him, *Tola* was judge, -	22	*1270*
After Tola, Jair was judge, -	22	*1248*
Fifth servitude under the Ammonites,	18	*1226*
After this *Jephtha* was judge, -	6	*1208*
After *Jephtha*, *Ibzan* was judge,	7	*1202*
After *Ibzan*, *Elon* was judge, -	10	*1195*
After *Elon*, *Abdon* was judge, -	8	*1185*
Sixth servitude under the Philistines, in the latter 20 years of which *Samson* and *Eli* were judges together, -	40	1177
Eli was judge 40 years, but 20 of them with *Samson* under the sixth servitude,	20	1137
After *Eli*, an interregnum 20 years and seven months, - -	20	1117

	Years.	B. C.
After the interregnum, *Samuel* was judge,	20	1097
After Samuel had judged Israel 20 years, Saul reigned,	20	1077
After Saul, David reigned,	40	1057
In the fourth year of Solomon, and the second month, the temple was begun,	3	1017
Sum,	579	1014

The only remark which this table suggests respects the omission of the 12 years, during which Samuel alone is said to have exercised the supreme power over Israel. These 12 years added to it would complete the sum repeatedly mentioned by Josephus of 591 complete or 592 current years.

TABLE XI.

ACCORDING TO PLAYFAIR. 1784.

System of Chronology, p. 310.

	Years.
Departure of Israelites from Egypt,	—
Arrival of Israelites in Canaan,	40
Death of Joshua, and first servitude,	25
Othniel began to judge Israel,	8
The second servitude under Moab,	40
Ehud began to judge Israel,	18
The third servitude under the Canaanites,	80
Deborah and Barak began to judge Israel,	20
The fourth servitude under Midian,	40
Gideon began to judge Israel,	7
Abimelech began to judge Israel,	40

	Years.
Thola began to judge Israel,	3
Jair began to judge Israel,	22
Jephtha began to judge Israel,	22
Ibzan began to judge Israel,	6
Elon began to judge Israel,	7
Abdon began to judge Israel,	10
Philistines, Samson, and Eli,	8
Anarchy began,	40
Samuel and Saul,	20
David began to reign,	40
Solomon began to reign,	40
The first year of building the temple,	4
	*540

Dr Playfair has shortened this period by leaving out the two years of anarchy after Joshua and the elders; the 18 years of servitude under the Ammonites; the 20 years of Eli's authority; and the 12 during which Samuel governed alone. These added to his sum total will make up the true amount, $2+18+20+12=52$: and $540+52=592$.

TABLE XII.

ACCORDING TO HALES. 1811.

From Analysis of Ancient Chronology, vol. i. p. 101.

	Years.	B. C.
Exode to death of Moses,	40	1648
1 *Joshua and the elders,*	26	1608

* The numbers in this table indicate the quantity of time that elapsed between the event to which they are affixed, and that which immediately precedes.

		Years.	B. C.
	First division of lands,	0	1602
	Second division of lands,	0	1596
	Anarchy, or *Interregnum*,	10	1582
I.	Servitude *Mesopotam.*,	8	1572
	2 *Othniel*,	40	1564
II.	Servitude *Moab.*,	18	1524
	3 *Ehud and Shamgar*,	80	1506
III.	Servitude *Canaan.*,	20	1426
	4 *Deborah and Barak*,	40	1406
IV.	Servitude *Midian.*,	7	1368
	5 *Gideon*,	40	1359
	6 *Abimelech*,	3	1319
	7 *Tola*,	23	1316
	8 *Jair*,	22	1293
V.	Servitude Ammon.,	18	1271
	9 *Jephthah*,	6	1253
	10 *Ibzan*,	7	1247
	11 *Elon*,	10	1240
	12 *Abdon*,	8	1230
VI.	Servitude Philist. 20	40	1222
	13 *Samson*, 20		
	14 Eli, 30	40	1182
	Samuel called, as a prophet, 10		
VII.	Servitude,	20	1142
	15 Samuel,	12	1122
	Saul and Samuel, 18	40	1110
	Saul, 22		
	David,	40	1070
	Solomon,	3	1030
	Temple founded after the exode,	621	1027

It will be observed, that Dr Hales has added about 30 years to the authentic period of Josephus and of the Sep-

tuagint; namely, 9 years to the anarchy immediately after Joshua and the elders, one year to the magistracy of Tola, and twenty years to that of Eli. This scheme creates a considerable difference from the computation of St Paul, who states, that, from the division of the land to Samuel the prophet, was about 450 years. According to Dr Hales, the length of that period is 480 years; an error which is not only at variance with the Scripture narrative, but also with the chronology of Josephus, which he professes to follow.

I have copied the above tables, in order to show the reader, at a single glance, the particulars in which our most distinguished chronologers differ, in regard to the period occupied by the judges and the two first kings of the Hebrews. As the computation of Archbishop Usher is that which has been introduced into the margin of our English Bible, and which has been followed by several authors of credit and learning, I may be allowed to state, at some length, the reasons why I feel myself compelled to reject it.

In the first place, his scheme is inadmissible, because it excludes the repeated intervals during which the Hebrews were in subjection to their enemies, and reckons only the years of peace or rest which are assigned to the successive judges. For example, he passes over the eight years of servitude inflicted upon the Hebrews by Chusan Rishathaim, and connects without any interruption the peace obtained by the victories of Othniel, with that which had been conferred upon the land by the government of Joshua; and although the sacred historian relates in the plainest terms possible, that the children of Israel served the king of Mesopotamia eight years, and were afterwards delivered by Othniel, who gave the land rest forty years, the arch-

bishop maintains, that the forty years now mentioned began, not after the successes of the son of Kenaz, but immediately after the demise of Joshua. Nothing certainly can be more obvious than that, in this case, the years of tranquillity and the years of oppression ought to be reckoned separately.

Again, we are informed by the sacred writer, that the children of Israel having done evil in the sight of the Lord when Ehud was dead, were sold into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who mightily oppressed them twenty years; and that afterwards, when their deliverance was effected by the zeal of Deborah and Barak, a rest of forty years was given to the land. No reader unbiassed by system would imagine, that in these forty years of peace were comprehended the twenty years during which the Hebrews were condemned to endure the cruel oppression of the king of Canaan. Could the land, in propriety of speech, be said to enjoy the blessings of peace and security, while its inhabitants were wasting their days amid the fears and privations of servitude? In respect, again, to the administration of Gideon, in whose time also the country was in quietness forty years, are we to admit that the domination of the Midianites, which continued seven years, constituted a part of the peaceful and happy period recorded by the historian? Are we to reckon among the ingredients of that quietness which the sword of Gideon procured for his country, the following particulars related by the inspired author of the book of Judges. "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years. And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel: and because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds. And so it was, when Israel

had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, even they came up against them; and they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza; and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. For they came up with their cattle, and their tents, and they came as grashoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it. And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord."

The sacred chronology of Usher, in fact, follows closely, in this division of ancient history, the scheme adopted by the Masoretic Jews; who, as Dr Hales remarks, have by a curious invention included the first four servitudes in the years of the judges who put an end to them; contrary to the express declarations of Scripture, which represent the administrations of the judges, not as synchonizing with the servitudes, but as succeeding them. The Rabbis were indeed forced to allow the fifth servitude to have been distinct from the administration of Jephtha, because it was too long to be included in that administration; but they deducted a year from the Scripture account of the servitude, making it, instead of eighteen, only seventeen years; and they curtailed another year from Ibzan's government, making it only six, instead of seven years. They sank entirely the sixth servitude under the Philistines of forty years, because it was too long to be contained in Samson's administration; and, to crown all, they reduced Saul's reign of forty years, to two years only. The dishonesty of the whole contrivance could only be equalled by its absurdity; furnishing internal evidence, that the period of four hundred and eighty years, foisted into the Hebrew text of 1st Kings, is itself a forgery.

Having again mentioned this chronological inaccuracy, to which I have already made allusion, I now proceed to prove, that the passage on which it rests was not originally inserted in the inspired record by the compiler of the Hebrew annals. It has occasioned to modern chronologers a good deal of perplexity; being inconsistent not only with the computations of all the ancient writers on this subject, whether Jewish or Christian, but also with the express numbers contained in the book of Judges; the sum of which amounts to at least a hundred and eleven years more. That it was not to be found in the Hebrew or Greek copies of the Scriptures, till nearly three centuries after Christ, is evident from the absence of all reference to it in the works of the several learned men who composed histories of the Jews, from the materials supplied to them in the sacred books of that people. The calculations of Demetrius and Eupolemus, which are supposed to have been founded on the numbers of the Septuagint, assume the longer series of years adopted by Josephus throughout the whole of his Antiquities. We find the same results in other pagan authors, as quoted by Clement of Alexandria,* and Theophilus of Antioch;† all of whom appear to have computed by the length of time assigned to the administrations of the judges; a method which they could have had neither any necessity nor inducement to pursue, had they been furnished with the sum total as we now see it in the sixth chapter of the first book of the Kings.

It admits not of any doubt, that the number in question was not contained in the Greek or Hebrew Bible, in the days of Josephus; for he refers to the very passage

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* Strom. i. † Ad Autol. lib. iii.

in which it is now inserted, without making the slightest observation in regard to it, although the period which he at the same time states, as having elapsed between the exode and the foundation of the temple, is directly at variance with it, to the extent of not less than 112 years. "Solomon," says he, "began to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign, in the second month, which the Macedonians call *Artemisius*, and the Hebrews *Jar*, five hundred and ninety-two years after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, and one thousand and twenty years after Abraham's coming out of Mesopotamia into Canaan."* Had the number 480 been in the text, Josephus, it is certain, would not have passed over it without some degree of notice.

It is worthy of remark, too, that Origen, in his commentary on the gospel of St John, cites the text, 1st Kings vi. 1., and even mentions the year of Solomon's reign, and the month in which that monarch began to build the temple, but takes not the slightest notice of the number of years which had intervened between that event and the exode. Γεγραπται ἐν τῃ τριτῃ των βασιλειων, τους λιθους και τα ξυλα τρισιν ἐτεσιν ἑτοιμασαν, ἐν δε τῳ τεταρτῳ ἐτει, μηνι δευτερᾳ, βασιλευοντος του βασιλεως Σολομοντος επι Ισραηλ· κ. τ. λ. "It is written in the third of the Kings, that they prepared the stones and the wood three years; and in the fourth year, in the second month of Solomon's reign over Israel, they began to build the house of the Lord."

We may rest assured, then, that the interval between the departure from Egypt and the commencement of the temple, was not specified in the copy of the ancient Scriptures which was in the hands of Origen; for, if he had

* Antiquities, book viii. chap. 3.

found such a statement there, he would unquestionably have repeated it in his commentary; as being by far the most material circumstance connected with the record, and much more important, at least, than the year and month of Solomon's government. It has accordingly been inferred, with the utmost show of probability, that in the year of Christ 230, when Origen wrote, the interpolation of the words, "And it came to pass in the 480th year," &c. had not taken place.

Eusebius is the first writer who used this disputed text as the ground of a chronological hypothesis; but as the particular work in which he quoted the passage has come down to us in a very mutilated condition, no great reliance can be placed upon its accuracy.* The bishop of Cæsarea is understood to have composed his Chronicon about the year 325;† whence we may conclude, that the date in the first book of the Kings must have been inserted about the beginning of the fourth century, by the hands or under the auspices of the fathers at Tiberias. At all events, there is no doubt that it was upon the authority of the statement now under consideration, that Eusebius was induced to follow the abbreviated chronology of the Rabbis; a piece of complaisance which was greatly condemned by Anianus and Panodorus, two learned historians, who flourished towards the end of the fourth century; as also by the indefatigable Syncellus, who has preserved in his Chronographia the opinions of these distinguished authors.

* It is well known that the Chronicon and the Canon Chronicus no longer exist in their original form. Jerome is said to have translated them both into Latin. Of the former, only a few extracts remain, which were published along with the latter work, in 1604. Scaliger, two years after, printed a new edition at Leyden, in which he presented a considerable portion of the original Greek, collected as fragments from the works of various authors.

† Cave. Hist. Liter. p. 127.

But the weight which might otherwise have attached to the opinion of Eusebius, in favour of the Jewish computation, will be found greatly diminished by the fact, that in his Evangelical Preparation, which was written some time after the Chronicon, he adopts the common and more ancient system of dates.* In all his works, indeed, with the single exception already mentioned, the bishop follows the chronology of the Septuagint; and assuredly, when we advert to the circumstances in which, at an early part of the seventeenth century, his Canon Chronicus was revived under the hands of Scaliger, we cannot ascribe much value to any conclusions contained in it which are not supported by other and more unambiguous authorities.

It is of more consequence to observe, that the number of years now found in the history of the Kings, could not have been in it, when St Paul delivered to the people of Antioch, the address which we find recorded in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts; because he there asserts, that from the division of the land of Canaan, until Samuel the prophet, there was a period of about four hundred and fifty years. Now, if to these four hundred and fifty years we add forty-seven for the time that passed between the exode and the settlement of the tribes on this side of Jordan, and ninety-five years for the administrations of Samuel, Saul, and David, together with the three first years of Solomon, we shall have, as the gross amount of the time which elapsed between the liberation from Egypt under Moses, and the building of the temple, the sum of five hundred and ninety-two years,—the precise period mentioned by Josephus, in the third chapter of the eighth

* Cave. Hist. Literaria, ubi supra.

book of his Antiquities. These numbers may be stated more distinctly as follows:—

	Years.
From exode to death of Moses,	40
—— death of Moses to division of the lands completed,	7
—— division of lands to Samuel,	450
Government of Samuel, alone,	12
Samuel and Saul,	40
Of David,	40
To the fourth year of Solomon,	3
	592

These striking facts leave no room for doubt, in regard to the justness of our reasoning on this important point of Scriptural chronology. They likewise decide the question as to the authenticity of the notice in the first book of Kings; proving, beyond the reach of all reasonable controversy, that the date, as it now stands in that portion of sacred writ, was unknown to the apostle of the Gentiles as well as to his inspired biographer.

Having thus stated the grounds on which I reject the chronological system of Archbishop Usher, which I have shown to be at once inconsistent with the express narrative of Scripture, and with the writings of all ancient historians, whether Jewish or Christian, I proceed to exhibit a tabular view of the extent and distribution of the period during which the judges and the two first kings of the Hebrews exercised their respective rule over that singular people.

TABLE XIII.

	Years.
From exode to death of Moses,	40
Joshua and elders,	25
Anarchy,	2
I. Servitude, under Cushan Rishathaim,	8
Othniel,	40
II. Servitude under Moabites,	18
Ehud and Shamgar,	80
III. Servitude under the Canaanites,	20
Deborah and Barak,	40
IV. Servitude under Midianites,	7
Gideon,	40
Abimelech,	3
Tola,	22
Jair,	22
V. Servitude under Ammonites,	18
Jephtha,	6
Ibzan,	7
Elon,	10
Abdon,	8
VI. Servitude under Philistines, Samson last 20 years,	40
Eli was judge 40 years, but 20 of them with Samson,	20*

* The Hebrew text, Josephus, the Vulgate Latin, the Chaldee Paraphrase, the Syriac and Arabic versions, assign to Eli forty years; but most of the Greek copies give only twenty years, as do also the Alexandrian and Vatican manuscripts. Theophilus bishop of Antioch, Sulpicius Severus, and Procopius of Gaza, have followed the authority of the Greek. It is most probable, as I have stated in the table, that of the forty years given to Eli, he spent twenty in the days of the Philistines, while Samson waged a predatory war with that people; and the other twenty after the death of this Hebrew champion.—*Chron. Antiq.* vol. i. p. 140.

	Years.
VII. Servitude or anarchy,	20.7m.
Samuel alone,	12
Samuel and Saul,	40
David,	40
Solomon,	3
Foundation of temple after the exode;	591.7m.

The sum here produced agrees, both in the amount and in the several parts, with the inspired record; for upon inspection it will be found, that, from the division of the land, six years after the death of Moses, down to the administration of Samuel as judge, there is the exact period of 450 years, mentioned by St Paul. It likewise corresponds exactly with the number which is given by Josephus in different parts of his works, and which is farther confirmed by a variety of computations which are incidentally brought forward in the course of his narrative.

For example, in the third chapter of the seventh book of his Antiquities, he remarks, that from the war carried on by Joshua against the Canaanites, down to the time at which David took Jerusalem, there was a space of 515 years. If to this sum we add 40 years for the government of Moses, 33 for the remainder of David's reign, and 3 for the beginning of Solomon's, we shall have $515+40+33+3=591$ complete years, as above, or 592, if we reckon the current year in which the temple was founded.

Again, in the eighth chapter of the tenth book, he relates, that the temple was burned by the Chaldeans four hundred and seventy-six years, six months, and ten days after it was built; and that it was then one thousand and sixty-two years, six months, and ten days from the departure out of Egypt. Now, if we deduct 470 years, 6

months, and 10 days, from 1062 years, 6 months, and 10 days, the remainder will amount, as before, to 592 years, as the period from the exode to the foundation of the temple.

We are told in another place, (Jewish War, book vi. chap. 10.) that the city of Jerusalem was demolished entirely by the Babylonians, four hundred and seventy-seven years and six months after the time of King David, who first took it from the Canaanites. Were we allowed to conjecture that the entire demolition of the *city* was not accomplished until about two years after the burning of the *temple*, the result in this case would likewise coincide exactly with the computations stated above; for if we deduct 475 from 1062, the demise of King David will fall in the 587th year after the exode; to which, if we add the first four years of Solomon's reign, the foundation of the temple will be fixed, as before, to the year 591 after the deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

In using the authority of Josephus here, I am perfectly aware of the error of forty years which runs through all his calculations, relative to the period during which the first temple stood. He estimated the reign of Solomon at double its proper length; and thereby unduly extended the interval from the exode to the captivity, by the whole amount of the error which has just been stated. The true extent of that period is 1022 years; whereas, by giving to Solomon an administration of eighty instead of forty, Josephus has increased it to 1062 years: but it is obvious, that the accuracy of our computation is not impaired by this excess, because the numbers throughout bear to each other the same relative proportion, and are equally affected by the operation of the error. To set this matter in a clearer light, let us suppose that we have deducted the forty erroneous years from the gross sum of

1062, and, at the same time, from 470, which make a part of that sum, and likewise contain the said forty years which we have consented to withdraw; it will appear, when this process is completed, that, instead of the larger sums just stated, we shall have the two corresponding numbers, 1022 and 430, the difference between which is 592, as formerly; on which account it must be evident, that the calculations of Josephus, although incorrect in one particular, afford to our hypothesis a degree of confirmation not less satisfactory than if they were, in all respects, strictly unimpeachable.

But, in addition to the authority of the Jewish historian, we are supplied by Clemens of Alexandria, with an interesting fact in support of the conclusion which we have thus adopted. He assures us, on the credit of a Grecian author, Demetrius I presume, that from the division of the land in the early times of the judges, down to Samuel the prophet, there were 463 years, 7 months. If to these years we add the 46 which preceded the distribution of the conquered territory; the forty years of Saul; the forty of David's reign, and the three first of his son's, we shall find the sum, as in all the other cases, to amount to 592; being the true number of years from the exode to the foundation of the temple.*

But it is unnecessary to accumulate authorities on a point already so well established both by inspired history, and by the unanimous testimony of the most approved writers in Jewish and Christian antiquity. Suffice it to remark, that the table which I have inserted above possesses the great advantage of agreeing with the Scriptural account in the particulars, and with Josephus in the gross sum of years. It removes, besides, the difficulty which, in

* Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. i. p. 337. ἑπτὰ ἀπὸ κριτῶν ἕως Σαμουηλ, ἔτη τετρακόσια ἑξήκοντα τρία, μῆνες ἑπτά.

almost every system of chronology that I have seen, is found to encumber the computation concerning the age of Samuel; both when he began to judge his people, and when he retired from that important office.

At the death of Eli, the young prophet was perhaps not less than twenty-two years of age. He is thought to have been about twelve when the mystical voice from the tabernacle first called him to be a depository of the divine intentions;* and he is supposed to have lived ten years longer, before the fatal battle took place in which the ark of God was taken, and the family of the aged priest was brought to an untimely end. This catastrophe was succeeded by the seventh servitude, or anarchy as it is sometimes described, which continued twenty years and seven months; so that when Samuel assumed at Mizpeh the direction of the Hebrew state, he had already attained the mature age of forty-two. Josephus informs us, that this son of Elkanah judged Israel, before the reign of Saul, during the space of twelve years,†—a period which Sir John Marsham saw reason to extend to sixteen years,‡ and Jackson to twenty. But, taking the smaller number, it will appear from the statement now made, that Samuel, at the election of Saul, was nearly fifty-five years of age,—a term which, although not greatly advanced within the borders of senility, might yet suggest to the judge of the whole twelve tribes, scattered over a wide surface of hilly country, the expediency of employing his sons to assist him at the remoter stations. The sacred historian accordingly relates, that "they were judges at Beersheba," the most distant point on the southern frontier. If then, to fifty-five, we add the eighteen years that Samuel governed

* Joseph. Antiq. lib. v. c. 10. † Joseph. Antiq. lib. vi. c. 12.
‡ Canon Chron. lib. ii. p. 99.

conjointly with Saul, we shall see the venerable prophet brought to the grave in his seventy-third year,—a result which corresponds not only with the ordinary limits of human life, but also with the several particulars mentioned in the inspired narrative in reference to the ministrations of Samuel.

In stating the age of Samuel at twenty-two, upon the commencement of the anarchy, I have followed Josephus and Dr Hales. The former, as is stated above, computes the years of the attendant of Eli as being about twelve at the time when he was charged with the solemn commission to that unfortunate priest; the latter maintains that the young Nazarite was called to be a prophet in the thirtieth year of Eli's judicature, or, in other words, ten years before the capture of the ark. It must indeed be acknowledged to be somewhat doubtful whether Eli lived so long as ten years after the warning which was communicated to him from heaven by the mouth of Samuel. Many writers are of opinion, that the threatening conveyed in that message was accomplished in less than a year; in which case, we must deduct nine years from the age of the prophet when he assembled the people in Mizpeh; and instead of forty-two, assign to him only thirty-three years, as the term of life to which he had attained. But if we suppose that he judged Israel only twelve years before the reign of Saul, and was consequently only forty-five when he anointed the son of Kish to the office of sovereign, we have to encounter the difficulty which arises from the description of the sacred historian, who relates, that Samuel was "old" when he made his sons judges in the land; and adds, that it was not until the young men had shown themselves unfit for the important duty intrusted to them, that the elders of Israel gathered themselves together at Ramah, and requested to have a king.

Mr Jackson attempts to remove this objection by extending the period of Samuel's administration to twenty years, instead of twelve, the number specified by Josephus, and then quotes the authority of Hippocrates, who records the opinion of the ancient world, that a man was entitled to the epithet of aged (πρεσβύτης) as soon as he had passed the limit of seven times seven, or forty-nine years.*

The consistency of the facts, and the harmony of the numbers, as I have given them, concur in bestowing an air of truth upon the hypothesis with which they are connected; whereas, according to Usher, Petavius, Capellus, and most other chronologers, who omit the seventh servitude, and the twelve-years of Samuel's judicature prior to the nomination of Saul, the prophet became a judge at thirteen; was an old grey-headed man, and had sons fit to assist him in his office, before he was twenty-three; and finally, died at an advanced age about the time he completed his fiftieth year.

Section V.

Having determined as exactly as the nature of the subject, and the great diversity of opinion which prevails in regard to it, would admit, the number of years which elapsed between the exode and the foundation of Solomon's temple, I proceed now to the easier task of fixing the amount of the period which extends from the latter of the events now mentioned, to the captivity of the two tribes and the demolition of the Jewish capital.

Josephus relates in general terms, that, from the building to the destruction of the temple by the Babylonians,

* Chron. Antiq. vol. i. p. 143.

there was an interval of four hundred and seventy years, six months, and ten days. If from this sum we subtract the forty years which, without any warrant from Scripture, he has added to the reign of Solomon, the remainder will be four hundred and thirty years,—the true period during which the regal power subsisted among the Hebrews, prior to the conquest of their country by the arms of Nebuchadnezzar. The following tables will present to the reader the length and successive order of the reigns which occupy this period; as also the duration of the kingdom of Israel under the several monarchs who inherited the sceptre of Jeroboam.

TABLE XIV.

SHOWING THE NUMBER OF YEARS FROM THE FOUNDATION OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE UNTIL ITS DEMOLITION BY THE BABYLONIANS.

	Years.	B. C.
The remainder of Solomon's reign,	37	1016
Rehoboam reigned	17	979
Abijah,	3	962
Asa,	41	959
Jehosaphat,	25	918
Jehoram or Joram,	8	893
Ahaziah,	1	885
Athaliah,	6	884
Joash or Jehoash,	40	878
Amaziah,	29	838
Uzziah or Azariah,	52	809
Jotham,	16	757
Ahaz,	16	741

	Years.	B. C.
Hezekiah,	29	725
Manasseh	55	696
Amon,	2	641
Josiah,	31	639
Jehoahaz, three months	—3m.	
Jehoiakim,	11	608
Jehoiachin, Jechoniah, or Coniah,	—3m. 10d.	
Zedekiah,	11	597
Jerusalem destroyed after foundation of temple,	430. 6m. 10d.	586

TABLE XV.

SHOWING THE REIGNS OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL, FROM THE REVOLT OF JEROBOAM UNTIL THE REDUCTION OF SAMARIA, AND THE CAPTIVITY OF THE TEN TRIBES.

	Years.	B. C.
Jeroboam,	22	979
Nadab,	2	957
Baasha,	23	955
Elah,	2	932
Zimri or Omri,	11	930
Ahab,	22	919
Ahaziah,	2	897
Jehoram or Joram,	12	895
Jehu,	28	883
Jehoahaz,	17	855
Jehoash or Joash,	16	838
Jeroboam II.	41	822
Interregnum,	11	781
Zachariah and Shallum,	1	770

	Years.	B. C.
Menahem,	10	769
Pekahiah,	2	759
Pekah,	20	757
2d Interregnum,	9	737
Hoshea,	9	728
Samaria taken,	260	719

It is worthy of notice, that the sum of the reigns of the kings of Judah, as exhibited in Table XIV. agrees precisely with the account given by Josephus of the same period; excepting always the error of forty years in the time of Solomon. This historian, as has been already repeatedly stated, computes that, from the foundation of the temple to its demolition, there were 470 years, 6 months, and 10 days; from which amount, if we subtract 40 years, there will remain 430, 6 months, and 10 days; the exact number that we have obtained, as comprehending the princes of the Davidic line, from the third year of Solomon down to the eleventh of Zedekiah. Usher, Lloyd, and Petavius calculate this interval at 424 years; Scaliger at 427; Jackson at 428; and Hales at 441. The last-named author introduces between the reigns of Amaziah and Uzziah an interregnum of eleven years; which occasions in his computation the excess which has just been pointed out, and for which, so far as I can see, he has no authority whatever either from Scripture or profane history.* Again, as to the learned writer of the Chronological Antiquities, who reckons the period from the building to the destruction of the temple to have been only 428 years, it will be found, that the sum of the twenty-one reigns, as described by

* Hales' Analysis, vol. i. Chronological Table of the Kings of Judah.

him at the 176th page of his first volume, amounts, in fact, to 430 years, 6 months, and 10 days exactly.

Dr Playfair, in like manner, inserts in his table an interregnum of eleven years; and then, in order to reduce the time of the regal government to its proper length, he subtracts from the reigns of several of the kings so many years as to make twelve in all, and thereby limits the period, which begins with the fourth of Solomon and ends with the eleventh of Zedekiah, to 429 years. For example, he diminishes the reign of Jehoram from eight years to three; that of Amaziah from twenty-nine to twenty-six; and that of Hezekiah from twenty-nine to twenty-seven: proceeding on a ground which appears to be not only destitute of support from the sacred narrative, but absolutely inconsistent with the plain words of the inspired authors, as well as with the succession of the events which they relate.* Still it must be acknowledged, that, from the occasional differences in the numbers attached to the same reigns as given in the books of Kings and Chronicles, not only in the modern copies of the Hebrew Scriptures, but also in the various editions and versions of the sacred volume which have been consulted by the learned, it is more easy to determine the gross period of the regal government among the Hebrews, than to fix, with critical accuracy, the precise number of years and months that any particular monarch sat upon the throne.

From the desolation of Jerusalem down to the Christian era, the interval has been so satisfactorily marked by Ptolemy and other ancient chronologists, that hardly any difference of opinion subsists in regard to it. The Canon of the eminent mathematician now named, enables us to discover that, from the first year of the captivity of the

* System of Chronology, p. 311.

Jews, to the accession of Artaxerxes, the son of Xerxes, to the Persian throne, there were - 122 years.
And from that event to the common epoch of Christianity, there were - 464
Making the total sum from the conquest of Judea by the Babylonians to the 30th year of Augustus Cæsar, - 586

The birth of Christ, according to the system of chronology which I have adopted, as derived from the Scriptures, from the writings of Jewish and Pagan historians, and from the works of the Christian fathers during the four first centuries, took place in the year of the world 5441. The particulars are as follows:—

	Years.
From creation to deluge, -	2256
— deluge to birth of Abraham, -	1072
— birth of Abraham to his removal into Canaan,	75
— that event to exode of the Israelites,	430
— exode to foundation of temple, -	592
— foundation to destruction of temple, -	430
— destruction of temple to birth of Christ,	586
	5441

It will be observed, that I have included in this computation the years of the second Cainan, whose existence is so resolutely denied by Dr Hales and several other chronologers. Without entering into the minuter points of the controversy which has been maintained on this head, I shall rest satisfied with showing, that, as the name of this son of Arphaxad is found in the Septuagint and in the gospel according to St Luke, so must his generation have also been inserted in the history of Demetrius, in that

of Eupolemus, and in the Antiquities of Josephus as they originally proceeded from his hand.*

The first of these historians, as we find him quoted in Eusebius,† computes the period from the flood to the descent of Jacob's family into Egypt at 1362 years; in which sum must be included the 130 years belonging to the generation of Cainan; for, otherwise, the amount could not be completed. His numbers must have stood as follows:

From deluge to birth of Abraham, -	1072
— birth of Abraham to his removal into Canaan,	75
— that occurrence to descent of Jacob, -	215
	1362

In another place he presents a different set of numbers, which bring us to the same conclusion.‡

* In reference to the authority of the evangelist here named, Mr Jackson remarks, "that Cainan was in the original text of St Luke's Gospel cannot with any reason be doubted, when all the manuscripts and versions agree in reading it, except only the manuscript of Beza, now in the University Library of Cambridge. And though this manuscript be as ancient as any other that we know of, it cannot be justly preferred to all the rest; and in this case more especially is it to be rejected, because the whole genealogy in which Cainan is left out is fictitious, and made out of a part of St Matthew's and a part of St Luke's genealogy, and agrees to no other whatsoever."—*Chron. Antiq.* vol. i. p. 74.

It was therefore not without some surprise that I read the following passage in the Prolegomena of Scaliger, prefixed to his Thesaurus Temporum. Speaking of Africanus, and of his reason for omitting the name of the second Cainan, he observes, "sed quia in vetustissimis exemplaribus Evangelii secundum Lucam, illum Cainan non extare animadverteret, et sciret neque in Judæorum neque in Samaritarum Hebraico legi, hac in parte consensui veterum, qui illum Cainan non recipiebant, satisfacere voluit." In this instance the learning of Scaliger was for once at fault. He was not aware of the stumbling-block which was thrown by the Rabbinical doctors, in the way both of Africanus and Origen; and which, while it turned them aside from the older path of chronology, compelled them to make up the deficiency by adding to the epoch of the Judges the sum which they had deducted from the postdiluvian patriarchs.—*Thesaur. Temp. Proleg.* fol. 3.

† Præp. Evangel. lib. ix. c. 21.

‡ See Eusebius as above.

He relates, that, from Adam to the descent of Jacob's family into Egypt, there passed 3624 years; to which if we add 215 for the time that family sojourned in the kingdom of Pharaoh; 592 for the interval between the exode and the building of the temple; 430 for the period that the temple stood, and 586 for the years which elapsed from the destruction of Jerusalem to the era of the Messiah, the result will be as follows:

3624
215
592
430
586
5447

The excess here above the number on which I have fixed is only six years; and these are to be found in the period between the creation and the flood, which Demetrius, following the Septuagint translation, computed to have taken place in the 2262d instead of the 2256th year of the world. That he did so we have the most certain proof in his own statement. From the creation of the world to the emigration of Jacob to Canaan there were, he says, 3624 years; and from the flood to the same emigration there were, he adds, 1362 years: now, if we subtract the latter from the former of these sums, the difference will be, as before, 2262 years, which was unquestionably the number which Demetrius found in his copy of the Greek Scriptures. When corrected on the principle now explained, the computation of Demetrius, from the creation to the nativity of Christ, will be exactly 5441 years,—the very number to which our inquiries have conducted us.

Again, Eupolemus, as has been already stated, wrote his History about fifty years after the author just named; that is, about 174 years before the Christian era. In the course of his narrative, he mentions, that, from the creation to the fifth year of Demetrius, who reigned in Asia, and to the twelfth of Ptolemy, son of Lagus, there were 5149 years; to which if we add 296, being the number of years from the fifth of Demetrius to the birth of our Redeemer, the total sum will be 5445.* If we suppose that Eupolemus, agreeably to the example of the Seventy, and of his predecessor Demetrius, reckoned 2262 from Adam to the deluge, we shall have six years to deduct from the amount now specified; leaving 5439 for the age of the world at the commencement of our era; being only two years less than the computation to which we have arrived by a different process, and according to another set of principles.

It is evident that both these writers must have included in their numbers the years of the second Cainan; for otherwise the sums which they present could not have been completed. In the case of Eupolemus, for instance, we must reckon as follows:—

	Years.
From creation to deluge,	2262
— deluge to Abraham,	1072
— Abraham to exode,	505
— exode to temple,	591
— temple to captivity,	429
— captivity to fifth of Demetrius,	290
	5149

* Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. i. p. 338.

	Years.
Add from the fifth of Demetrius to Christian era,	296
	5445

It remains, that, by a similar mode of reasoning, we prove, to the satisfaction of the reader, that Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, must likewise have been included in the computation of Josephus.

In the preface to the first book of his Antiquities, and in the beginning of his first book against Apion, he reckons 5000 years from the creation to the end of the Hebrew canon of Scripture; which canon, he tells us, was contained in twenty-two sacred books, and ended at the reign of Artaxerxes, who succeeded Xerxes. This sum must have been composed of the following particulars:—

	Years.
From creation to deluge, - -	2256
— deluge to Abraham, - -	1072
— Abraham to exode, - -	505
— exode to temple, - -	592
— foundation to destruction of temple,	470
— destruction of temple to reign of Artaxerxes,	122
	5017

Here, it will be observed, I have included both the 130 years of Cainan and the forty years which Josephus added to the reign of Solomon; and the total sum, after all, exceeds 5000 only by the small number 17. The forty years additional, assigned to the successor of David, must of course be deducted; and then the period from the creation to the first of Artaxerxes will be 4977, to which if we add 464, the number of years from the death of Xerxes to

the birth of the Messiah, the whole extent of time, from the beginning of the world to the era of human redemption, will amount to 5441 years.

The reader cannot fail to be struck with this remarkable agreement in the computations of Demetrius, Eupolemus, and Josephus; and when he calls to mind the circumstances in which these authors composed their respective works; the remote times in which they lived; and the long interval which elapsed between the first and the last of them, being more than three hundred years, he will give its proper weight to the singular coincidence which has just been pointed out. Josephus praised in general terms the accuracy of his two predecessors, observing, that "they did not err much from the truth;" that is, we are now entitled to conclude, they differed from him only in the forty years by which he gave an undue extent to the reign of Solomon; for, these being subtracted, there is the most complete agreement as well in the particulars as in the gross amount of their several computations.* At all events, it is perfectly certain that the name of the second Cainan must have been received by all the three, into the list of the postdiluvian patriarchs; and also that his generation constituted one of the terms which regulated their chronological investigations. Without the 130 years between the times of Arphaxad and Salah, the 5000 years mentioned by Josephus, as comprehended in the canon of Scripture, cannot be made up.

Nor can there, indeed, be any doubt that Cainan, the father of Salah, was in the Hebrew text as well as

* Ὁ μεν τοι Φαληρευς Δημητριος καὶ Φιλων ὁ πρεσβύτερος ὀυ πολὺ της ἀληθειας διημαρτον. Lib. i. contra Apion., p. 458. The learned reader requires not to be informed, that Josephus has here confounded Demetrius, the librarian of Ptolemy, with the historian of the same name, who lived about sixty years afterwards. The word Φαληρευς is probably the scholium of some ignorant annotator.—*See Huet. Demon. Evangel.*, lib. i. c. 23, &c.

in the Septuagint version of the sacred writings; and, moreover, that his name continued in the former, not less constantly than in the latter, to the end at least of the first century of the Christian æra. In the course of the second century, as has been already stated at large, the Jews brought forward several new translations of the Bible, in which they departed considerably from the chronology of the Seventy; though, before that time, they were wont not only to acknowledge the accuracy of the last-named version, but even to read it publicly in their synagogues. In shortening the period from the flood to Abraham, they left out the name of Cainan,—an alteration which appears to have very soon extended to some copies of the Septuagint itself;—and hence arose a considerable degree of confusion and inconsistency among the chronological writers of the second and third centuries, the origin of which they themselves seem not to have fully comprehended.*

For example, the generation of Cainan must have been in the copy of the Septuagint used by Africanus; because we find that Eusebius, in his Chronicon, who, in this work, is little more than a copyist, not only names that patriarch, but also computes 1072 years from the flood to the birth of Abraham, necessarily including the 130 years between Arphaxad and his grandson Salah: and yet, in a subsequent part of his work, he follows the authority of the Hebrew text, or at least of a version containing the alterations which had already been introduced by the Rabbinical commentators.† Origen, too, was puzzled by the va-

* See Chronological Antiquities, vol. i. p. 78.

† Sem filius Noæ, quum esset annorum c. genuit Arphaxat secundo anno post Diluvium; et vixit Sem, postquam genuit Arphaxat, ann. D. et genuit filios et filias, et mortuus est. Arphaxat, quum esset annorum CXXXV. genuit Cainan; et vixit Arphaxat, postquam genuit Cainan, ann. CCCXXX. et genuit, &c.—*Eusebii Chron.* p. 9. *in Scalig. Thesauro Temporum.*

riety of texts which passed through the hands of the learned in his time; and, accordingly, in his celebrated Hexaplar edition of the Scriptures, he affixed to the name of Cainan, in the Greek column, the particular mark which denoted that the Hebrew annals no longer retained the generation of that postdiluvian father. But, notwithstanding this apparent deference to the authority of the original Scriptures, Origen himself must have followed the computation of the Seventy in regard to the second Cainan; it being impossible to make up his number of 4830 years from Adam to Christ without including the 130 years assigned to this son of Arphaxad.*

Syncellus was not a little amazed at the innovations which were thus sanctioned by Africanus and Eusebius; not being able to account for them except on the supposition that they had both used very corrupted copies.† The monk appears not to have been aware that Origen had placed an *obelisk* at the name of Cainan as a mark of his rejection from the Hebrew records; and that Eusebius, though he found the name in Africanus, had not full confidence in the authority of the latter when opposed by the Jewish doctors, and was therefore induced to expunge it from the list of Noah's descendants.

It was not, however, till after the time of Origen that the discrepancies now mentioned had any existence. Prior to the appearance of the Hexapla, no chronologer ever entertained the smallest doubt that the name and genera-

* Trat. Lat. ix. in Matth. c. 24., as quoted by Jackson.

† Τούτον δὲ τὸν Καινᾶν ὁ Ευσέβιος ουκ ἐστοιχείωσε τῳ Ἑβραικῷ, ἀντίγραφῳ κακῷ ἀκολουθήσας, διὸ καὶ ἐσφάλη ἔτη ρλ. Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ὁ Αφρικανος διημαρτε, μὴ στοιχειωσας τουτον τῳν δευτερον Καινᾶν.

Cainan istum Eusebius corrupto Hebræorum exemplari usus non recensuit, ac propterea annis centum triginta hallucinatus est. Africanus pariter, eodem secundo Cainan non numerato, deflexit a vero.—*Syncel. Chronographia*, p. 79.

tion of Cainan were entitled to a place in the catalogue of the postdiluvian patriarchs; and, moreover, that, as Abraham was described in histories which, even in the times of Origen and Eusebius were accounted ancient, as the tenth in the line from Noah, the writers of those days could not fail to perceive that, if Cainan were omitted, the father of the faithful must have been only the ninth in succession after the deluge. Berosus, the Chaldee annalist, alludes to Abraham as a righteous man and great, and skilled in the celestial science, who lived in the tenth generation after the flood:* and Eupolemus, in like manner, after describing the catastrophe of the deluge, takes notice of the same distinguished personage as being born in a city of Chaldea, called Ur, in the tenth generation succeeding that destructive event.

It has been proved, from an examination of the particular numbers which, in the Antiquities of Josephus, make up the total sum of 5000, or rather 5017 years, from the creation to the reign of Artaxerxes, that the Jewish historian must have included, in his computation, the 130 years of Cainan; on which account we are warranted to conclude, that, when he says Abraham was the tenth from Noah, he must have meant, as Berosus and Eupolemus meant, the tenth from the deluge. If he did not mean this, could he, in support of his own opinion, consistently have quoted Berosus, who distinctly states, that the wise Chaldean did certainly live in the tenth generation after the flood? He must, on this supposition, have adduced

* Μνημονεύει δὲ του πατρὸς ἡμων Αβράμου Βηρωσσος, ουκ ονομαζων, λέγων δε ουτως· "Μετα τον κατακλυσμὸν δικατη γενεᾷ, παρα Χαλδαίοις τις ἦν δίκαιος ανὴρ καὶ μέγας, και τα ουράνια ἔμπειρος." Berosus autem, Abrami parentis nostri suppresso tamen nomine, his verbis meminit; "decima post diluvium ætate apud Chaldæos vir extitit justus et eximius, rerumque celestium peritus."—*Fl. Josephi Antiq. Jud.* lib. i. cap. vii.

the authority of the Babylonian writer against himself. But, leaving these inferior considerations, we may boldly assert, that Josephus must have included in his computations the generation of Cainan, because, without it, the grand number on which his chronological system rests could not be made up.*

I have now only to state, that the year at which the narrative in these volumes begins, being that immediately succeeding the death of Joshua, is the 3898th from the creation of the world, and the 1543d before the nativity of Christi, according to the common era. Following the usual authorities, I have placed the demise of the successor of Moses in the sixty-fifth year after the exode; computing the whole period of his command and government at twenty-five years.

Dr Shuckford, relying upon the accuracy of the chronological scheme introduced by the Rabbis, has fixed the death of Joshua in the year of the world 2578; being, according to the same scheme, the 1426th before the epoch of Christian redemption. The difference between the two systems of computation, the Jewish, namely, and that to which I have given the preference, is, in the period from Adam to the nativity, not less than 1437 years; the greater part of which, however, is to be found in the ages prior to the deliverance from Egypt. From the exode to the birth

* In Cainane vero expungendo prorsus absurdi sunt viri eruditi, plus tribuentes Judæis librariis quam evangelicæ veritati. Improbè sentiunt, cum dicunt Septuaginta Seniores, viros sanctos, propria libidine Cainanem istum addidisse; multo vero improbius, cum Evangelistam, horum fraude seductum, errasse affirmant. Quanto rectius culpam istam imputamus librariis, quibus solenne est tales committere errores, præsertim ubi similia vocabula sibi invicem vicina occurrent; quam fidei interpretibus, quos ut tanti criminis reos peragamus, nulla prorsus vel ratio vel prætextus potest comminisci. Fidendum itaque exemplaribus, et credendum auctoritati B. Lucæ, ac totius veteris Ecclesiæ consensui.—*I. Vossius, De Vera Ætate Mundi*, cap. vi. p. xxi

of our Saviour the difference is only 117 years; 112 of which belong to the time of the judges; and the remaining five are scattered over the long space which intervened between the foundation of the temple and the thirtieth year of Augustus Cæsar.*

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* On this interesting subject, the reader is referred to the following modern authorities:—

Isaac Vossius, De vera Ætate Mundi.
——— De Septuagint. Inter. eorumque trans. et chronologia.
Pezron, l'Antiquité des Tems etablie.
——— Defense de l'Antiquité des Tems.
Martianay, Defense de l'Hebreu.
Jos. Scaliger, De Emendatione Temporum; et Thesaurus Temporum, complectens Euseb. Pamph., Chronicon, &c.
Petavius, De Doctrina Temporum. Tabulæ Regum, &c. a mundo condito. Rationarium Temporum.
Simon, Excerpta adversus Isaac Voss. et Judicium de Responsione Vossii.
Marsham, Canon Chronicus Egyptiacus, Ebraicus, Græcus.
Hayes, Dissertation on the Chronology of the Septuagint.
Usher, Chronologia Sacra, annexed to his Annals.
Lud. Capellus, Chronologia Sacra.
Rob. Baillie, Opus Historicum et Chronologicum.
Sir I. Newton, Brevia Chronica, et Chron. Vet. Regn. emendata.
Lloyd, Chronological Tables.
Bedford, The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms amended; and Scripture Chronology.
Blair, Chronology and History of the World from the Creation to the year of Christ, 1753.
Jackson, Chronological Antiquities.
Cooper, Essay on the Chronology of the World.
Vignoles, Chronologie de l'Histoire Sainte.
Longverve, Dissertationes de Variis Epochis.
Kennedy, Complete System of Astronomical Chronology.
Beveregii, Institutiones Chronologicæ.
Longchamps, Les Fastes Universels, ou Tableaux Hist. Chron., &c.
Du Fresnoy, Chronological Tables of Universal History.
Freret, and others, in the Mem. de l'Academie des Belles Lettres.
Clayton, Chronology of the Hebrew Bible vindicated.
Playfair, System of Chronology.
Hales, New Analysis of Chronology

BOOK I.

CONTAINING

A CONNECTION OF SACRED AND PROFANE HISTORY, FROM THE DEATH OF JOSHUA TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF REGAL GOVERNMENT AMONG THE HEBREWS.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE CIVIL AND POLITICAL CONSTITUTION OF THE ANCIENT HEBREWS.

No portion of Jewish history is more obscure or imperfectly recorded than that which extends from the death of Joshua to the reign of Saul. Not only is our path obstructed by the ordinary difficulties which arise from a defective chronology and a meagre detail of facts; we have also to encounter those greater obstacles which attach to an ignorance almost entire, as well in respect to the general state of society which subsisted during that long period of nearly five hundred years, as in regard to the precise nature of the political relations which appear to have united, in a kind of federal constitution, the Hebrew tribes on both sides of the Jordan. We are supplied only with a few notices of persons, offices, and characters, which it is not easy to refer to the operation of known or fixed principles. The incidents which occupy the attention of the reader seem to bear an affinity to a condition of things which is no where clearly developed; and, accordingly, he no sooner attempts to form into a regular narrative, the events which befell the remarkable people whose history is contained in the book of Judges,

than he has to deplore the want of those luminous views which belong to the more perfect records of a later age.

The commission intrusted to Moses and Joshua appears to have had no other object besides that of conducting the children of Israel into the promised land. When the former perceived himself at the point of death, he named a successor; who, under the guidance of the supernatural light which was bestowed upon the leader of the chosen people, would, he believed, fulfil all the purposes contemplated by Divine Providence in behalf of his countrymen. But the latter appointed no one to fill his place or to discharge his duties; conceiving, it is probable, that as soon as the tribes were settled in their respective possessions, the extraordinary government, which had conducted them through the wilderness, and enabled them to subdue their enemies on the borders of Canaan, was no longer to exist.

The Samaritan Chronicle, it is true, informs us, that at the last assembly which Joshua convoked, he nominated the twelve chiefs of the tribes, of whom one was to be chosen king; that he cast lots to determine upon which of them this important charge should be conferred; and that the lot declared in favour of his nephew Abel, whom he forthwith proceeded to decorate with a crown, and invest with the other ensigns of office.* But I need scarcely add, that no credit is due to this narrative, discountenanced as it is by the whole tenor of the sacred history relative to the successors of Joshua.

The inspired writer contents himself with stating, that "it came to pass a long time after the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age: and Joshua called

* Hottinger. Smegma Orientale, cap. viii.; Saurin, Discours x.

for all Israel, for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers." The purport of the address which he delivered on this occasion, and which is given at length in the twenty-third chapter of the book which bears his name, was to remind them of their religious obligations, as the elect people of Jehovah, and also of the labours which they had yet to undergo, in subduing the remainder of the promised land. But neither in this speech, nor in the exhortation with which he afterwards at Shechem endeavoured to animate the zeal and constancy of his followers, did he make any allusion to the form of government which it behoved them to adopt; declining even to direct their choice in the appointment of a chief, who might conduct their armies in the field, and preside in the deliberations of their national council. In a word, we find not, in the period which elapsed between the division of the land and the demise of Joshua, any act of public authority, by examining into which we might be enabled to determine, what was the form of administration which immediately succeeded the military government established by Moses in the wilderness.*

The first events which occur after the death of the distinguished captain, under whose banners the Hebrews had crossed the Jordan, appear to establish the fact, that to every tribe was committed the management of its own affairs; even to the extent of being entitled to wage war and to make peace, without the advice or sanction of the general senate. The only government to which the sons of Jacob were ever accustomed, was that most ancient and universal system of rule, which gives to the head of every family the direction and control of all its members.

* Joshua xxiii. 1, 2, 3., xxiv. 1.

We find traces of this natural subordination among the Israelites, even amidst the pressure of Egyptian bondage. During the negotiations which preceded their deliverance under the ministry of Moses, the applications and messages, it will be observed, were all addressed to the chiefs and patriarchal rulers of the people. "Go gather the elders of the Israel together," was the command of Jehovah to the son of Amram, when the latter received authority to rescue the descendants of Isaac from the tyranny of Pharaoh.* A similar distinction was made at the giving of the law from Mount Sinai. Aaron and the rulers of the congregation advanced to Moses and conversed with him; "and afterwards all the children of Israel came nigh."†

During the pilgrimage in the wilderness, and more particularly when the tribes approached the confines of the devoted nations of Canaan, the natural jurisdiction of the family chiefs was rendered subordinate to the military power of their inspired leader; who, as the commander of the armies of Israel, was esteemed and obeyed as the lieutenant of the Lord of Hosts. The authority of Joshua rested on the same basis, and assumed at first the same features. In truth, the martial labours to which his office called him, placed the successor of Moses at the head of his countrymen, as a general guiding them on their march, or forming their array in the field of battle, rather than as a teacher of wisdom, or as the guardian of a peculiar faith and worship. Till the conquered lands were divided among the victorious tribes who followed his standard, Joshua was a soldier, and nothing more; while, on the other hand, the congregation of the Hebrews, who

* Exodus iii. 16. † Exodus xxxiv. 31, 32.

seconded so well his military plans, appear on the page of history in no other light than that of veteran troops; rendered hardy by long service in a parching climate, and formidable by the arts of discipline under a skilful and warlike chief.

From the exode, in short, till towards the end of Joshua's administration, we lose sight of that simple scheme of domestic superintendence which Jacob established among his sons. The princes of tribes and the heads of families were converted into captains of thousands, of hundreds, and of fifties; regulating their movements by the sound of the trumpet; and passing their days of rest amidst the vigilance and formality of a regular encampment. But no sooner did they turn the sword into the ploughshare, and the spear into the pruning-hook, than they reverted to their more ancient form of society. When there appeared to be a sufficient quantity of land wrested from the Canaanites, to afford to the tribes, on the western side of the Jordan, a competent inheritance, "Joshua sent the people away, and they departed:" from which moment the military aspect which their community had assumed gave way to the patriarchal model; to which all their institutions bore an immediate reference, and to the restoration of which their hopes and their wishes were constantly directed.

No one can have failed to remark, that the Hebrews manifested an undue impatience to enjoy the fruits of their successful invasion. They had fought, it should seem, to obtain an inheritance in a rich and pleasant country, rather than to avenge the cause of pure religion, or to punish the idolatrous practices of the children of Moab and Ammon. As soon, therefore, as the fear of their name and the power of their arms had scattered the inhabitants of the open countries, the Israelites began to sow and to

plant; more willing to make a covenant with the residue of the enemy, than to purchase the blessings of a permanent peace, by enduring a little longer the fatigue and privations of war. Their eagerness to get possession of the land flowing with milk and honey seems to have compelled Joshua to adopt a measure, which led, at no distant period, to much guilt and suffering on the part of his people. He consented that they should occupy the vacant fields, before the nations which they had been commissioned to cast out were finally subdued; that they should cast lots for provinces which were still in the hands of the native Gentiles; and that they should distribute, by the line and the measuring-rod, many extensive hills and fair valleys which had not yet submitted to the dominion of the sword.

The effects of this injudicious policy soon rendered themselves apparent; and all the evils which were foreseen by the aged servant of God, when he addressed the congregation at Shechem, were realized in a little time to their fullest extent. The Hebrews found the remnant of the nations among whom they consented to dwell, proving scourges in their sides and thorns in their eyes; and able to dispute with them the possession of the land which they had been taught to regard as a sacred inheritance, conferred upon them in virtue of a divine promise made to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Amorites, as the author of the book of Judges relates, forced the children of Dan into the mountains; for, he adds, they would not suffer them to come down to the valley; but the Amorites would dwell in Mount Heres in Ajalon, and in Shaalbim.*

* Judges, chap. i. verse 35.

It is very clear, indeed, that the children of Israel did not, for several hundred years, complete their conquest of the promised land. TheCanaanites, recovering from the terror which had fallen upon them in the commencement of the Hebrew invasion, attempted not only to regain possession of their ancient territory, but even to obliterate all traces of their defeat and subjection.* What movements were made by the petty sovereigns of the country, in order to effect their objects, we are nowhere expressly told; but we find, from a consultation held by the southern tribes of Israel, soon after the death of Joshua, that the necessity of renewing military operations against the Canaanites could no longer be concealed.† It was accordingly resolved, that Judah and Simeon should unite their arms and take the field, to prevent, in the first place, an inroad with which their borders seem to have been threatened, and, subsequently, to reduce to a state of entire subjection the cities and towns which stood within the limits of their respective districts. "And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites, and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot."

The success of this expedition is recorded in the opening of the book of Judges, accompanied with a description of the appropriate punishment inflicted on the tyrant of Bezek. It is said, that the combined tribes carried him to Jerusalem, where he died,—a remark which is not unattended with a certain degree of obscurity, inasmuch as we are nowhere assured that the holy city fell into the hands of Joshua after he had defeated the kings of the Amorites at Gibeon; while it is certain, that, neither Judah nor Simeon reduced it subsequently to the renewal of

* Judges, chap. i. verses 21—36.

† Judges, chap. i. 1.

the war. The sacred historian, indeed, with the view of removing the difficulty in question, states, in the form of a parenthesis, that "the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire."* But it is perfectly obvious, notwithstanding, that the stronghold of Salem resisted all the attacks of the conquerors; and that his success must have been confined to such parts of the town as were not covered by the fortifications. In the fifteenth chapter of the book of Joshua, where a particular list is inserted of the cities which submitted to that warrior, it is recorded, "As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day."†

After the Simeonites had assisted their brethren of the other tribe to subdue the mountainous district about Jerusalem, and the southern parts bordering on the wilderness of Paran, they proceeded, says the historian, with the aid of that tribe, to reduce several towns situated in their own lot, particularly Gaza, Askelon, and Ekron.§ But it is suspected that an error has crept into this por-

* Judges i. 8. † Joshua xv. 63.

In the following note, Bishop Horsley seems to take for granted the reduction of Jerusalem by Joshua, though that fact is not only omitted in the chapter to which he alludes, but is quite inconsistent with the assurance given in the last verse of the fifteenth chapter of the same book. "The capture of Jerusalem, though it took place in the lifetime of Joshua, and is related in its proper place in the tenth chapter of the book of Joshua, is very properly mentioned in the 8th verse of this chapter, to explain how it came to pass that the victorious Israelites should carry the captive king Adonibezek to that place. The expulsion of the three sons of Anak from Hebron by Caleb, is mentioned for a particular reason in the 20th verse. But no reason can be assigned for the mention of it here in the 10th verse, or for the repetition in the five following, of Othniel's expedition against Kiriath-sepher, and his marriage with Achsah. I much suspect that these six verses are an interpolation, and should be expunged."—*Biblical Criticism*, vol. i. p. 283.

§ Judges i. 18.

tion of the Hebrew text; both because it is almost certain, that Gaza and Ekron, two of the five famous cities which belonged to the Philistines, could not have been taken at the period now under consideration; and also, because the narrative is plainly inconsistent with other parts of the sacred history, as well as with the Septuagint version, and the Antiquities of Josephus. In the translation of the Seventy we read that the children of Judah did not reduce these cities; and the Jewish annalist relates, in the most distinct terms, that though the united tribes took Ascalon and Azotus, Gaza and Ekron escaped them.* The reason which he assigns for their failure gives to his narration an additional degree of probability. Accustomed to fight on foot, the Hebrews gained an easy victory over the inhabitants of the hills; but having no defensive armour capable of protecting their bodies against the chariots and horsemen of the plains, they found themselves compelled to allow the Philistines to retain a large extent of the low country, together with the principal cities which were spread over it.†

From the scanty notices supplied in the first and second chapters of the book of Judges, we can hardly derive any distinct account of the military proceedings of the small

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* Και ουκ εκληρονημησεν Ιουδας την γαζαν ουδε τα ὁρια αυτης, ουδε την ασκαλωνα ουδε τα ὁρια αυτης, και την ακκαρω ουδε τα ὁρια αυτης, την αζωτον ουδε τα περισποια αυτης.—*Jud.* 1, 18.

Η δε Ιουδα φυλη και Συμεωνις τας μεν καλα την ὁρεινην της Χαναναιας πολεις ειλον, των δε εν τω πεδιῳ και προς θαλασσῃ, Ασκαλωνα τε και Αζωτον· Διαφυγει δε αυτους Γαζα, και Ακκαρων.—*Flav. Joseph. Antiq. Jud.* lib. v. cap. 2.

Bishop Patrick remarks, that "we do not read that Jerusalem was ever taken by Joshua, though it seems highly probable that when he took the king of Jerusalem, he did to it as he did to the rest of the cities belonging to those kings, (Joshua x. 3. 23.) But when he was gone to conquer other parts of the country, it is likely that the old inhabitants returned again and took possession of it, for the land was not then divided among the Israelites."—*Patrick's Commentary on Judges.*

† Josephus, book v. chap. ii.

body of Hebrews, who had deemed it expedient to have recourse to arms. Between the death of Joshua and the appointment of the first of the judges, several events appear to have taken place, the memory of which is not well preserved; and which indeed would have been altogether lost, had not the sacred writer been induced to mention some secondary occurrences more or less closely connected with the former. Of this description is the punishment inflicted by the confederated Israelites upon the tribe of Benjamin; the idolatry of Micah; and the straitened condition of the Danites. In the period just specified, Torniel* imagines that he can discover the historical fragments of four separate wars; that, namely, against Adonibezek; that which ended in the conquest of Jerusalem; a third which was waged with the Canaanites in the southern provinces of Judea; and, lastly, the campaign in which the three cities of the Philistines yielded to the forces of Judah and Simeon. But there is good reason to believe that more than one of these occurrences belong to an earlier period of the Jewish history; and that the account given of them, in the book of Judges, should be regarded in no other light than as a recapitulation of circumstances necessary for understanding the more recent part of the narrative.

It is the opinion of the most learned commentators, that the affecting resolution of the Levite, with its disastrous consequences; the mission of the children of Dan in search of an increase to their inheritance; and the story of the ephod and the teraphim in the house of Micah on Mount Ephraim, should be placed in the interval which preceded the administration of Othniel, the first deliverer of Israel.

* Torniel Annales in Ann. Mundi 2594.

The profound corruption which these events imply, presents at first sight an objection to the chronological order now stated. We are unwilling to believe, that, in so short a period after the miraculous fall of Jericho, and the other manifest interpositions of Divine Providence in behalf of the chosen people, there should have been among the tribes, not only the most atrocious depravity in point of morals, but also a regular system of idolatrous worship.*

Did we not find that Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, was still alive, to consult the Almighty concerning the issue of the war with the Benjamites, we should be disposed to withdraw the scene of so much guilt and infatuation to a greater distance from the times of Moses and of Joshua. Did we number amongst the idolaters only the superstitious old woman who devoted her eleven hundred shekels of silver in order to furnish her house with gods; and her son who had stolen the treasure for a purpose, it is probable, less solemn and conscientious; we should not be affected with so much surprise.† But, in addition to that domestic wickedness, we perceive among the spies of Dan, who were selected for their courage and talents, a similar disposition to put confidence in molten images, and to neglect the pure worship transmitted to them by their fathers.

The spirit of idolatry, indeed, appears to have contaminated the whole tribe; for when the six hundred men appointed with weapons of war went up to Mount Ephraim, "the five men who were sent to spy out the country of Laish, said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a

* Judges xvii. 5.; xix. 22—26.

† Judges xvii. 2.

graven image, and a molten image; now, therefore, consider what ye have to do. And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah, and saluted him. And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate. And the five men that went to spy out the land went up and came in thither, and took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. Then said the priest unto them, What do ye? And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thy hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest; is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel? And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people. And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. And they set them up Micah's image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh."*

Even the expedient that was adopted for re-establishing the tribe of Benjamin, unveils to us a scene which bears a closer resemblance to the idolatrous usages of the Gentiles, than to the strict and guarded ritual of the Mosaical law. "Then they said, Behold there is a feast of the Lord in Shiloh yearly, in a place which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah,

* Judges xviii. 14—21. 30, 31.

Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go, and lie in wait in the vineyards. And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin.*

There can be no doubt that these occurrences took place during the anarchy; this is, when there was no king or judge in Israel, and when every man did that which was right in his own eyes.†

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* Judges xxi. 19—22.

† Judges xxi. 25.

Dr Lightfoot has adduced the following reasons in support of this opinion:—

1. The Danites were unsettled when the stories of the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters came to pass, and therefore this could not be long after Joshua's death.

2. *Phinehas* was alive at the battle of Gibeah. Chap. xx. 28.

3. The wickedness of Gibeah is reckoned for their first villany. Hosea x. 9.

4. Deborah speaketh of the forty thousand of Israel that perished by Benjamin, as if neither sword nor spear had been among them. Chap. v. 8.

5. *Mahaneh Dan*, which is so named upon the march of the Danites, when they set up their idolatry, (chap. viii. 12.) is mentioned in the story of Samson, though that story be set before the story of their march. Chap. xv. 25.

6. Dan is omitted among the sealed of the Lord (Rev. vii.), because idolatry first began in his tribe, as is said before.

7. Ehud may very well be supposed to have been one of the left-handed Benjamites, and one of them that escaped at the rock Rimmon. Chap. xx. 16. and 21.

Now the reason why the Holy Ghost hath laid these stories which came to pass so soon, in so late a place, may be supposed to be this:—

1. That the reader, observing how their state policy failed in the death of Samson, who was a Danite, might presently be showed God's justice in it, because their religion had first failed among the Danites.

2. That when he observes that eleven hundred pieces of silver were given by every Philistine prince for the ruin of Samson, (chap. xvi. 5.) he might presently observe the eleven hundred pieces of silver that were given by Micah's mother for the making of an idol, which ruined religion in Samson's tribe.

3. That the story of Micah, of the hill country of Ephraim, the first destroyer of religion, and the story of Samuel, of the hill country of Ephraim, the first reformer of religion, might be laid together.—*Lightfoot's Works*, vol. i. p. 46.

But the defections of the peculiar people did not pass unrebuked. The sacred narrative informs us, that an angel or messenger of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and upbraided the Hebrews with their inconstancy and backsliding; reminding them of their obligation to make no league with the inhabitants of the land, but to throw down their altars, and destroy every memorial of their superstition. He repeated also the denunciation, which they had formerly heard from the mouth of Joshua, that the Almighty would no longer go out with their armies, nor crown their labours with victory; that he would not drive out the heathen from before their faces, but leave them in possession of the country, that they might act as thorns in their sides, and snares in their paths.*

The sense of guilt and ingratitude appears on this occasion to have made a transient impression on their hearts. While the words of the divine messenger sounded in their ears, they lift up their voices and wept; and even proceeded so far as to do sacrifice unto the Lord their God. To preserve moreover the remembrance of their penitence and vows, they called the name of the place Bochim, the scene of tears and contrition; but no sooner did the messenger return to his holy residence, than they returned to their evil practices, and renewed their adoration to Baal and Astaroth, the gods of the Sidonians.†

The most inattentive reader of the second chapter of the book of Judges must be struck with the manifest dislocation which has befallen this portion of sacred writ. The Jews, as Houbigant observes, were wont to separate the text into small sections, consisting of a few verses each; and these divisions are still distinctly marked in

* Judges ii. 1—3. † Judges ii. 11, 12, 13.

some of the manuscript copies of the original Scriptures. The chapter under consideration appears to have been divided into portions of five verses, every one of which begins a new subject, or at least introduces a different train of thought and illustration: and there is great probability in the opinion of those commentators, who maintain that the second and even the third section ought to be read before the first. According to the present arrangement, the rebuke of the angel at Bochim is narrated before the account which is given of the death of Joshua, as well as of the subsequent defection of his people from the religion which he had made them swear to observe.*

Incapable alike of obedience and of sincere repentance, the children of Israel were given up by the Divine anger to suffer the punishment so often threatened, and now so justly merited. They were delivered into the hands of a master, the king of Mesopotamia, who ruled them with a rod of iron eight years. They dwelt, says the historian, among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites; and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods; and they did evil in the

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* ויצל מלאך יהוה *advenit Angelus Domini.* Tum missus est ad Israelitas Angelus, postquam, Josue mortuo, et ceteris senibus Israel post ipsum mortuis, Israelitæ ad alienos deos deficerunt, et a Chananæis oppressi sunt, ut narretur infra, v. 6, 7, 8, 9, et 10. Itaque ordinem hic habemus perturbatum. Nam quæ supra dictis versibus narrantur, ejusmodi sunt, ut parenthesis loco esse non possint, post versus 1, 2, 3, 4, et 5. Ordo restituitur, si aliena prius posteriori postponas, ut primum narretur, superstite Josue, et senibus illis, qui Dei miracula viderant, nondum mortuis, servisse Domino Israelitas; deinde subjugatur, postquam a Domino ad alienos deos defecissent, et cum a Chananæis opprimerentur, missum fuisse Angelum, qui scelus ipsorum eis exprobraret. Perturbationi ordinis occasionem forte dederit lacuna illa, quam Judæi in codicibus quibusdam fecerunt, et sectionis etiam mutatio. Num sectio minor inchoatur, una, versu 1. altera, versu 6. et Librarius posuerit, post lacunam, sectionem eam, quæ erat posterior, cum priorem debuisset.—*Houbigant Notæ Criticæ*, vol. i. p. 259.

sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves: and the Lord sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim.*

Before we enter upon the exploits of the judges, it will be necessary to take a survey of the constitution of the Hebrew commonwealth, as it appeared upon its first settlement under the successors of Joshua. Without some general views on this subject, it would be impossible to understand either the political or the military transactions which occupy the history of five hundred years. We must, therefore, endeavour to ascertain the grounds upon which the federal union of the tribes was established; their relations towards one another in peace and in war; the resources of which they were all possessed for conquest or self-defence; their civil rights and privileges as independent states; their laws and judicatories; and, above all, the nature and extent of their property, and the tenure on which they held it.

1st, As the basis of all lasting power is known to rest upon property, I shall first proceed to give an abridged account of that agrarian law, which was sanctioned by Moses and acted upon by Joshua; and which will be found not only to have determined, but also to have secured the inheritance of every Israelite who entered the promised land.

The extent of that portion of Palestine which was granted to the Hebrew nation has been variously estimated. On the authority of Hecatæus, a native of Abdera, as quoted by Josephus, the limits of the territory possessed by the Jews are fixed at three millions of acres; supposing the *aroura* of the Greeks to correspond with this denomination of English measure.† Proceeding on the

* Judges iii. 5—8.

† Joseph. contra Apion, cap. i.

ground just stated, the Abbé Fleury and other writers have attempted to prove, that the quantity of land mentioned by Hecatæus would maintain three millions, three hundred and seventy-five thousand men,—a computation which is liable to many objections, and has, therefore, not been generally received.

It is obvious, that the Abderite, who lived in the time of Alexander the Great, and is said to have afterwards attached himself to the person of the first Grecian king of Egypt, described the country of the Jews as he saw it under the domination of the Syrian princes of the Macedonian line. He beheld only the inheritance of the two tribes which had returned from the Babylonian captivity; confined his estimate, of consequence, to the provinces that they were permitted to occupy; and took no account of those extensive districts which formerly belonged to the ten tribes of Israel, and which, in his days, were in the hands of the mixed race of men, who were descended from the Assyrian colonists whom Shalmaneser planted in their room.*

Confiding in the accuracy of Spanheim,† Reland,‡ and Lowman,§ I should compute the amount of the Hebrew territory at about fifteen millions of acres; assuming, with the writers just named, that the true boundaries of the promised land were mount Lebanon on the north, the wilderness of Arabia on the south, and the desert of Syria on the east. On the west, some of the tribes extended their possessions to the very waters of the Great Sea; but in other parts they found their borders restricted by the lords of the Philistines, whose rich domains comprehended

* 2 Kings xvii. 24.

† Spanheim Charta terræ Israelis.

‡ Reland Palæstina, lib. ii. c. 5.

§ Lowman on the Civil Government of the Hebrews.

the low lands and strong cities which stretched along the shore. It has been calculated by Spanheim, that the remotest points of the Holy Land, as divided by Joshua and possessed by king David, were situated at the distance of three degrees of latitude, and as many degrees of longitude, including in all about twenty-six thousand square miles.

If this computation be correct, there was, in the possession of the Hebrew chiefs, land sufficient to allow to every Israelite, capable of bearing arms, a lot of about twenty acres; reserving for public uses, as also for the cities of the Levites, about one-tenth of the whole. It is probable, however, that, if we make the proper allowances for lakes, mountains, and unproductive tracts of ground, the portion to every householder would not be so great as that now stated. But there were ample means of plenty and of frugal enjoyment within the limits of one-half the quantity of land estimated above. The Roman people under Romulus, and long after, could only afford two acres to every legionary soldier; and in the most flourishing days of the commonwealth the allowance did not exceed four. The *quatuor jugera* is an expression which proverbially indicated plebeian affluence and contentment; a full remuneration for the toils of war, and a sufficient inducement at all times to take up arms in defence of the republic.

Those who are acquainted with the writings of Michaelis require not to be informed, that he has extended the bounds of the Hebrew nation much beyond the limits assigned by Spanheim, Reland, or Lowman. Calculating from the Mediterranean to the banks of the Euphrates, and from the borders of Phenicia to the river of Egypt, or Rhinocorura, he estimates the extent from east to west at sixteen degrees of longitude, and from north to south at eight degrees of latitude; that is, about eight hundred

miles in length, and five hundred and fifty in breadth.* As there is no doubt that the Israelites carried their pastoral establishments into the very heart of the Arabian desert eastward, and had several towns of importance within a few days journey of the Euphrates, the computation of Michaelis is not to be hastily rejected. But it is obvious, at the same time, that the views of this learned writer respect a period of Hebrew history considerably later than the era of the judges; and can only be pronounced correct when restricted to the brilliant interval which succeeded the conquests of David. That the quantity of land contained within the ordinary limits of Palestine was, however, equal to the wants of all the people who were conducted into it by the son of Nun, will not be denied by any person who has paid due attention to the subject as compared with the circumstances of other countries.

The superficial extent of England has been variously estimated by political calculators as containing from thirty to forty-five millions of statute acres. Let us assume 35,000,000 as an approximation to the truth, which, divided among a population of 10,000,000, would afford about three acres to every individual. But, of the gross amount now specified, it is said that not more than twelve millions of acres are under cultivation, or employed in any one year to produce corn or other vegetable food for man. About an equal quantity is used for pasture; and more than one-third of the whole remains waste or unimproved. In this way, we find, that, even in the richest part of this kingdom, there is little more than two acres to each person; and if we deduct the portion of agricultural produce which is consumed by horses and other animals kept for

* Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, vol. i. p. 53—120.

show or pleasure, as also that which, by means of fermentation, is converted into an article of comparative luxury, we shall discover that the average extent of land which falls to an English household, consisting of five individuals, does not exceed so many acres.*

The territory of the Hebrews was ordered to be equally divided among their tribes and families according to their respective numbers; and the persons selected to superintend this national work, were Eleazar the high priest, Joshua who acted in the character of judge, and the twelve princes or heads of Israel.† The rule which they were to follow is expressed in these words: "And ye shall divide the land by lot, for an inheritance among your families; and to the more ye shall give the more inheritance; and to the fewer ye shall give the less inheritance: every man's inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falleth; according to the tribes of your fathers ye shall inherit."

Every tribe was thus put in possession of a separate district or province, in which all the occupiers of the land were not only Israelites, but of the same stock, and descendants of the same patriarch. The several families, again, were placed together in the same neighbourhood, receiving their inheritance in the same part or subdivision of the tribe; or, to use the language of Lowman, each tribe may be said to have lived together in one and the same county, and each family in one and the same hun-

* Lewis, describing the Holy Land, remarks, that "its situation is in a very warm climate, between 30 degrees 4 minutes, and 33 degrees 2 minutes of northern latitude; and between 64 degrees 49 minutes, and 68 degrees 20 minutes of longitude; being in length, from the northern parts of Galilee to the southern parts of Judea, about 200 English miles; and in breadth, from the eastern parts of Peræa to the western parts of Samaria, about half as much, and in some places less: so that it contained a spot of land not half so large as the kingdom of England."—*Origines Hebrææ*, vol. i. p. 23.

† Numbers xxxiv. 16, 17, 18.

dred: so that every neighbourhood were relations to each other, and of the same families as well as inhabitants of the same place.*

It has been supposed† that the princes of the tribes and heads of families were supplied with a larger portion of land than fell to the inheritance of an ordinary household. "It were absurd to think, that the lot determined of proportions; for so a mean man might have come to have a richer one than the prince of his tribe: but the proportions allotted unto tribes being stated, though at first but by guess, and entered into the lot-book of the surveyors, (who, saith Josephus, were most expert in geometry,) the princes came first into the urns, whereof the one contained the names of the tribes that were to draw, the other the names of those parcels of land that were to be drawn first unto a whole tribe. Thus the name of a tribe, Benjamin for example, being drawn out of one urn, unto that name a parcel was drawn out of the other urn, the country, for example, between Jericho and Bethlehem. This being done, and the prince of the tribe having chosen in what place he would take his agreed proportion, whether of fourteen thousand acres or the like: then the rest of the country was subdivided in the lot-books according to the number of families in the tribe of this prince; and the parcels subdivided being cast into one urn, and the names of the patriarchs into the other, the same tribe came again by families. Thus every patriarch making choice in what one part of this lot he would take his agreed proportion, whether of four thousand acres or the like, the remainder was again subdivided according to the number of names or households in his family. If they were more than the

* Civil Government of the Hebrews, p. 4.
† Harrington's Commonwealth of Israel.

parcel would furnish at four acres a man,* then was that defect amended by additions of the next parcel; and if they were fewer, then the overplus was cast over unto the next parcel. Thus the inheritance of the children of Simeon was taken out of the portion of the children of Judah, for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them; "therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them."†

To secure the permanence and independence of every separate tribe, a law was enacted by the authority of Heaven, providing that the landed property of every Israelite should be unalienable. Whatever encumbrances might befall the owner of a field, and whatever might be the obligations under which he placed himself to his creditor, he was released from all claims at the year of jubilee. Ye shall hallow, said the inspired legislator, the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof. It shall be a jubilee unto you, and ye shall return every man to his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. And the land shall not be sold for ever; for the land is mine, saith the Lord, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.‡

The attentive reader of the Mosaical law will observe, that, though a Hebrew could not divest himself of his land in perpetuity, he could dispose of it so far as to put another person in possession of it during a certain number of years; reserving to himself and his relations the right of redeeming it, upon the payment of a regulated

* Harrington here proceeds on the statement of Hecatæus, copied by Josephus, which would not have allowed more than four acres to a household; but I have shown in the text, that the computation of the Abderite did not embrace the whole of the promised land; not more, indeed, than the portion which was occupied by Judah and Benjamin.

† Joshua xix. 9. ‡ Levit. xxv. 23.

compensation, and having the sure prospect of a reversion at the period of the jubilee. In the eye of the lawgiver, this transaction was regarded not as a sale of the land, but merely of the crops for a stated number of seasons. It might, indeed, have been considered simply as a lease, had not the owner, as well as his nearest kinsman, enjoyed the privilege of resuming occupation, whenever their means or their inclination should induce them to repay the sum for which the temporary use of the land had been purchased.*

The houses which were built in fields or in villages, were, in regard to alienation, placed on the same footing as the lands themselves; being redeemable at all times, and destined to return to their original owners in the year of jubilee. Houses in cities or large towns were, when sold, redeemable only during one year; after which the sale was held binding for ever.† There was indeed an exception in this case in favour of the Levites, who could at any time redeem the "houses of the cities of their possession;" and who, moreover, enjoyed the full advantage of the fiftieth year.

The effects of this law, if faithfully observed, must

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* Levit. xxv. 24—28.

† Ea fuit lex agraria quæ vetuit ne quis venditione aut ullo contractu plenum dominium fundi sui transferret in alium. Nam et iis qui egestate compulsi agrum vendidissent, redimendi jus quovis tempore concessit; et ni redemptus esset, restitui eum gratis in Jubilæi celebritate jussit.—*P. Cunæus De Rep. Heb. in Thesaur. Antiq. Sacr.* vol. iii. p. cccxcv.

De ædibus urbanis lex ejusmodi lata fuit, uti qui domum vendidisset redimere eam possit intra annum; post autem, illo elapso, emptor eam propriam haberet. Sed nec propinquis jus redemptionis fuit, et jubilæi beneficium hic nullum erat. Redditum autem emptori a redemptore pretium integrum fuit, etsi vendita traditaque domus ante plures menses erat. Etiam ultimo anni die redimere aedes suas dominus potuit. Et, si abesse eum, cui vendiderat, aut dolo latitare cerneret, curiam adiit, atque ibi, Senatu coram, pretium quod acceperat, deposuit, egressusque diffregit foris atque aedes suas intravit.—In Levitarum urbibus haud idem juris fuit.—*P. Cunæus De Rep. Heb. in Thesaur. Antiq. Sacr.* vol. iii. p. cxxv.

have been very beneficial. The equality which prevailed among the people, in respect to wealth, necessarily perpetuated that equality of rank and political importance which appears to have been one of the main objects contemplated by Moses, when he framed the Hebrew constitution. As land could not be sold, no individual could attain to any marked ascendency over his brethren; and as every householder inherited a portion of the soil sufficient to maintain in comfort a large family, no Israelite could be reduced to the condition of absolute want. Besides, the interest which every man had in the country, and his attachment to the spot on which his ancestors had lived for generations, gave much strength to the feeling of patriotism, and supplied the best spirit for a national militia. Whenever the tranquillity of the republic was menaced, there was a population of twelve hundred thousand men ready to take the field; all armed and provisioned at their own expense, and following the banner of their chiefs, who were at once their kinsmen and neighbours. Even in the time of Joshua, the males capable of bearing arms amounted to six hundred thousand; while at the commencement of the regal government, and more particularly in the days of David and Solomon, the united tribes, in a moment of danger or alarm, could muster nearly a million and a half of effective soldiers.

In every community recently formed, as well as in all countries in which manufactures and commerce have not created a variety of distinctions among the inhabitants, the public defence has been always considered as very closely connected with the distribution of the land. The laws of Rome present many interesting enactments on this subject. The founder of that city could not afford more than two acres to each of his followers; and it was not till after the expulsion of the kings, that the estate of a

Roman was enlarged to seven acres.* When the success of the republic in foreign wars had filled the coffers of public men with tributary gold, the various regulations, which used to be enforced in regard to the extent of land which a citizen might hold, were gradually allowed to fall into disuse. The lingering spirit of democracy, indeed, suggested from time to time new rules and severe penalties against the undue increase of territorial possessions. Tiberius Gracchus exerted his influence to obtain the sanction of the legislature to a law, which at once prohibited every one from holding as property more than five hundred acres, and appointed commissioners to divide among the poorer class of people, the fields of such wealthy landlords as had purchased more than the extent just specified. Cunæus states, that, on the same ground, a popular leader, named Stolo, induced the senate to enact, that no person should possess more than fifty acres; but this reformer, it is added, was the first to violate his own statute. Caius Lælius, also, the friend of Scipio Africanus, endeavoured with as little success to check this departure from the ancient usages of the republic. The intrigues and violence of faction, it is said, compelled him to relinquish his patriotic undertaking. But the opposition which he had to encounter was supported on a basis much more firm than any mere prejudice founded in the views of a political party. No law can oppose the natural progress of society; and in a nation, particularly, such as the commonwealth of Rome, where commerce was despised, and manufacturing industry confined to domestic slaves, riches were necessarily compelled to seek an investiture in land. The changes which take place in every old country

* Varro De Re Rust. lib. i. 10. Plin. lib. xviii. 3. 11. Liv. v. 30. Columella, i. 5. Val. Max. iv. 3. 5.

render futile all the expedients which can be devised for perpetuating equality in the condition of the people; and it has been uniformly found, that the defence of the community, which is at first intrusted to the patriotism of the general population, comes at length to depend upon the skill and valour of a mercenary army.

In the earlier periods of English history, the law required that "all houses of husbandry that were used with twenty acres of ground, or upwards, should be maintained and kept up for ever; together with a competent proportion of land, to be used and occupied with them, and in no ways to be separated from them. By these means, the houses being kept up, did of necessity enforce a dweller, and the proportion of land for occupation being kept up, did of necessity enforce that dweller not to be a beggar or cottager, but a man of some substance. This did wonderfully concern the might and manhood of the kingdom, to have farms as it were of a standard sufficient to maintain an able body out of penury; and did in effect amortize a great part of the lands of the kingdom, unto the hold and occupation of the yeomanry, or middle people, of a condition between gentlemen and cottagers or peasants. Now, how much this did advance the military power of the kingdom is apparent by the true principles of war, and the examples of other kingdoms. For it hath been held by the general opinion of men of best judgment in the wars, that the principal strength of an army consisteth in the infantry or foot. And to make good infantry, it requireth men bred not in a servile or indigent fashion, but in some free and plentiful manner. Therefore, if a state run most to noblemen and gentlemen, and that the husbandmen and ploughmen be but as their work-folks or labourers, or else mere cottagers, which are but housed beggars; you may have a good cavalry, but

never good stable bands of foot. And this is to be seen in France and Italy, and some other parts abroad, where in effect all is noblesse or peasantry.—Thus did the king secretly sow Hydra's teeth; whereupon, according to the poet's fiction, should rise up armed men for the service of this kingdom."*

The Hebrews, like most other nations in a similar state of society, held their land on condition of military service. The grounds of exemption allowed by Moses, prove clearly that every man of competent age was bound to bear arms in defence of his country.† When the tribes of Reuben and Gad had obtained their settlement on the farther side of the Jordan, they appear to have considered their attendance with the army no longer obligatory. They were desirous to take possession of their lands, and to devote all their cares to the flocks which they had already collected in the course of their wars with the children of Moab and Ammon. But the expostulation of Moses recalled them to a sense of duty. "Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here?" The conquest of Canaan was the price which was to be paid for the inheritance promised to the descendants of Abraham; and no tribe was allowed to enter upon the occupation of its separate allotment until all were provided with a suitable share. "We will not return to our houses, said the Reubenites, until the children of Israel have inhabited every man his inheritance." If ye will do this thing, replied their governor, and will go armed before Jehovah to war, and will go all of you armed before Jehovah, until he hath driven out all his enemies before him, and

* Bacon's Hist. of Henry VII. Works, vol. i. p. 62. Edition 1819.
† Deut. xx. 5. 8. and Deut. xxiv. 5.

the land be subdued before Jehovah, then afterwards ye shall return and be guiltless before Jehovah."*

That the land of Israel was held upon a military tenure, and also that the general senate, consisting of the chiefs of tribes, had the power of exacting service from the whole body of the people, are two points which are strikingly illustrated by an occurrence that took place at the close of the war against the Benjaminites. Upon a muster of the confederated army, it was discovered that no man had been sent from Jabesh Gilead to join the camp at Mizpeh; whereupon it was immediately resolved, that twelve thousand troops should be despatched to put all the inhabitants of that city to military execution. And the congregation commanded them, saying, "Go, and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children:" and the only reason assigned for this severe order was, that, "when the people were numbered, there were none of the men of Jabesh Gilead there."†

II. The reader will now be prepared to accompany me in a few remarks on the civil constitution of the Hebrews, both as it respected the government of the several tribes viewed as separate bodies, and as it applied to that of the whole nation as a confederated republic.

The tribes of the Israelites, strictly speaking, amounted only to twelve, descended from the twelve sons of Jacob. But, as the posterity of Joseph was divided into two tribes, the host which entered the land of Canaan under Joshua comprehended thirteen of those separate genealogies. Viewed in reference to more secular rights and duties, however, the tribe of Levi, having no part nor lot

* Numbers xxxii. 6—16. xxxiii. 20—24. † Judges xxi. 8—13.

with their brethren, is not usually reckoned in the number; while, on other grounds which have been already alluded to, the tribe of Dan, at a later period, was sometimes excluded from the list.

In the twenty-sixth chapter of the book of Numbers we have an account of the muster which was made of the Israelites on the plains of Moab; from which the numerical strength of the eleven secular tribes may be exhibited as follows:—

Joseph (including Ephraim and Manasseh)	85,200
Judah,	76,500
Issachar,	64,300
Zebulun,	60,500
Asher,	53,400
Dan,	46,400
Benjamin,	45,600
Naphtali,	45,400
Reuben,	43,730
Gad,	40,500
Simeon,	22,200

This enrolment comprehended all the men above twenty years of age; to which may be added 23,000 of the tribe of Levi, "all males, from a month old and upward: for they were not numbered among the children of Israel, because there was no inheritance given them among the children of Israel."*

In every tribe there was a chief, called the prince of the tribe, or the head of thousands; and under him were the princes of families, or commanders of hundreds. For

* Numbers xxvi. 62.

example, we find that, at the muster which was made of the Hebrews in the wilderness of Sinai, Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, was prince of the tribe of Judah.* This tribe, like all the others, was divided into several *families*; the term being used here, not in its ordinary acceptation to signify a mere household, but rather in the heraldic sense, to denote a lineage or kindred, descended from a common ancestor, and constituting one of the main branches of an original stock.

On this principle, the sons of Judah became the heads of so many families, which were distinguished by their names; in the same way as the immediate progeny of Esau obtained the rank of Dukes of Edom; and as the Arabian chiefs, at the present day, exercise the authority which has descended to them through a long line of patriarchs. "The sons of Judah after their families were; of Shelah, the family of the Shelanites; of Pharez, the family of the Pharzites; of Zerah, the family of Zarhites: and the sons of Pharez were; of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites. These are the families of Judah, according to those that were numbered of them, threescore and sixteen thousand and five hundred.†

It appears, moreover, that a record of these families, of the households in each, and even of the individuals belonging to every household, was placed in the hands of the chief ruler; for it is related, that, on the suspicion excited in regard to the spoils of Jericho and the discomfiture at Ai, "Joshua brought Israel by their tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken; and he brought the families of Judah, and he took the family of the Zarhites;

* Numbers i. 7. † Numbers xxvi. 20, 21, 22.

and he brought the family of the Zarhites, man by man, and Zabdi was taken; and he brought his household, man by man, and Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken."*

We may collect from the twenty-sixth chapter of the book of Numbers, that the heads of families, at the time the children of Israel encamped on the eastern bank of the Jordan, were in number fifty-seven.

Reuben,	4.	Hanochites, Palluites, Hezronites, Carmites.
Simeon,	5.	Nemuelites, Jaminites, Jachinites, Zarhites, Shaulites.
Gad,	7.	Zephonites, Haggites, Shunites, Oznites, Erites, Arodites, Arelites.
Judah,	5.	Shelanites, Pharzites, Zarhites, Hezronites, Hamulites.
Issachar,	4.	Tolaites, Punites, Jashubites, Shimronites.
Zebulun,	3.	Sardites, Elonites, Jahleelites.
Manasseh,	8.	Machirites, Gileadites, Jeezerites, Helekites, Asrielites, Shechemites, Shemidaites, Hepherites.
Ephraim,	4.	Shuthalhites, Bachrites, Tahanites, Eranites.
Benjamin,	7.	Belaites, Ashbelites, Ahiramites, Shuphamites, Huphamites, Ardites, Naamites.
Dan,	1.	Shuhamites.
Asher,	5.	Jimnites, Jesuites, Beriites, Heberites, Malchielites.
Naphtali,	1.	Jahzeelites, Gunites, Jezerites, Shillemites.

If to these we add the thirteen princes, the heads of

* Joshua vii. 16, 17, 18.

tribes or phylarchs, the sum of the two numbers will be seventy; whence there is some ground for the conjecture of those who allege that the council which Moses formed in the wilderness consisted of the patriarchal chiefs, who, in right of birth, were acknowledged as bearing an hereditary rule over the several sections of the people.

It is probable that the first-born of the senior family of each tribe was usually received as the prince of that tribe; and that the eldest son of every family succeeded his father in the honours and duties which belonged to the rank of a patriarch. But the sacred narrative presents too few details to permit us to form, with confidence, any general conclusions in regard to this point. The case of Nahshon, moreover, has been viewed as an instance to the contrary; and it certainly seems to prove, that, if the prince of the tribe was not elective, he was not always, at least, the direct descendant of the first-born. Nahshon was the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, who was a younger son of Hezron, the son of Pharez, a younger son of Judah.*

From the particulars now stated, we find that every tribe had a head who presided over its affairs; administered justice in all ordinary cases; and led the troops in time of war. He was assisted in these important duties by the subordinate officers, the chiefs of families, who formed his council in such matters of policy as affected their particular district; supported his decisions in civil or criminal inquiries; and commanded under him in the field of battle.†

"These princes of tribes and heads of families," says

* 1 Chron. ii. 10, 11.

† Principes autem tribuum fuere, qui singulas tribus duxerunt, earumque rationes administrarunt. Officium vero patriarchiarum fuit, ut familias quibus præerant, convocarent, ad eosque referrent quæ ad rempublicam pertinerent, et duces eorum in bellos [illegible].—*Sigon. De Rep. Heb. in Thes. Antiq. Sac.*, vol. iv. *Bertram de Rep. Heb.* p. xxxi. *in Thes. Antiq.*

Lowman, "may be represented as lords-lieutenants of a county, and their deputy-lieutenants; or as generals and lieutenant-generals; being constant general officers when the tribe was to march as part of the army of Israel: and, in the tribe, they were the principal magistrates to summon the tribe to a general assembly when there was occasion for it; or when any affairs relating to the whole tribe were to be proposed, or any resolution of consequence to be taken by the whole tribe; or when any thing was to be communicated to it from the general states of the United Tribes, which required the concurrence of the province.

"The officers in each city may, in like manner, be considered as the local officers of the militia in the several hundreds and divisions of the county or province. This made a provision of colonels and captains to draw the forces of the tribe together, and to lead them, wherever they were directed, to a general rendezvous, where the prince of the tribe as general, and the heads of families as lieutenant-generals, should receive them; and at all times to exercise them to arms at home, the better to prepare them for the service of their country, whenever they should be called to march in defence of it.

"As civil authority was generally joined to military command in this constitution, so these captains of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, were also elders of the people. They were as a standing senate and council in the places of their habitation; so that we conceive the same persons invested with the authority of aldermen and justices of peace, at the same time that they were colonels and captains of the militia.

"Thus, with the assemblies of the people, they managed the public affairs of each hundred or division; at the same time they were in readiness, not only to appear as a council of war with the prince of the tribe, the general, and with the

heads of families, the lieutenant-generals, as military officers, but, moreover, to meet them on all occasions as a civil council or parliament, as a sort of representative of the people of the tribe in its several divisions, when there was any occasion to summon them together to treat on any arduous affairs concerning the public good of the tribe.

"This constitution of the particular tribes appears as plain and evident as can be expected in so short a history as we have of the Hebrew nation, especially when the original constitution was so soon altered, and the affairs of government were so confused in the anarchy soon after the death of Joshua. However, even in those times, there are so many evident marks of the principal parts of the constitution, as must render all the rest highly probable to one who would carefully lay all things together, in order to find out the design and plan of the whole."*

III. But the polity established by the Jewish lawgiver was not confined to the constitution and government of the separate tribes. It likewise extended its views to the common welfare of the whole, as one kingdom under the special direction of Jehovah; and provided, that, on all great occasions, they should have the means of readily uniting their counsels and their strength. Even during the less orderly period which immediately followed the settlement of the Hebrews in the land of their inheritance, we find traces of such a general government; a great council or senate of elders, whose deliberations guided the administration of affairs in all cases of difficulty or hazard; a judge who was invested with a high degree of executive authority as the first magistrate of the commonwealth; and, thirdly, the controlling voice of the congregation of Israel, whose concurrence appears to have been at all

* Lowman, on the Gov. of the Hebrews, p. 80.

times necessary to give vigour and effect to the resolutions of their leaders. To these constituent parts of the Hebrew government we may add the oracle, or voice of Jehovah; without whose sanction, as revealed by Urim and Thummim, no measure of importance could be adopted either by the council or by the judge.

It has been justly remarked, at the same time, that, however extensive the power might be which was committed to the supreme court of the nation, and how much soever the authority of a military judge among the Israelites resembled that of a Roman dictator, the privilege of making laws was at no time intrusted to any order of the Jewish state.* As long as the Hebrews were governed by a theocracy, this essential prerogative was retained by the Divine Head of the nation. "Now, therefore, O Israel, hearken unto the statutes and unto the judgments which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you."†

It is the opinion of several learned men, that the council of Seventy, established by Moses in the wilderness, was only a temporary appointment, and did not continue after the Hebrews were settled in Canaan. The object which it was meant to serve was fully accomplished when

* Conringius De Rep. Heb. "Hoc igitur argumento, maximo est, juris illius majestatis quod in legibus ferendis est positum, nihil quicquam penes hominem fuisse.

† Deut. iv. 1, 2. xii. 32. Bishop Sherlock observes, that the power of legislature could not in a proper sense belong to the tribes; for though they might and did make such rules as we commonly call *By-laws*, yet the law of Moses was their unalterable law both for civil and ecclesiastical affairs.—*Dissertations.*

the congregation ceased to exist in a military form, and were placed under their natural governors, the heads of their families and tribes, in the land of their possession. We shall discover no traces of that celebrated court during the times of the judges, unless we think proper to identify with the Jethronian prefects, the general assembly of the princes and patriarchal chiefs; which is known to have been occasionally called together to consult on affairs of urgency and importance. That the Sanhedrim, in fact, did not exist prior to the Babylonish captivity is rendered extremely probable from the following considerations.

We find not in Scripture any mention made of that supreme court before the return of the Jews from the Assyrian provinces; and had such an institution existed under the judges and kings, it is as unreasonable to suppose, that the sacred historians should have neglected to notice it, as that Livy or Tacitus, in their respective works, should have omitted all allusion to the proceedings of the Roman senate.

It has been observed, too, that the Israelites generally followed their king, whether in the practice of idolatry or in the worship of Jehovah,—a compliance which is very unlikely to have taken place, had there existed an established body of doctors, lawyers, and scribes, possessing a degree of authority in religious matters superior to that of the king, and at the same time not less opposed to heathenish superstition than zealous for the observance of the Mosaic ritual.

It, moreover, plainly appears that both the judges and the kings exercised on many occasions a despotic power, and, in fact, administered the general government according to their own will, without consulting the Sanhedrim,—a species of rule which would have been pronounced both unnecessary and intolerable, had there existed a council so

well fitted to direct as well as to moderate the sovereign power.

Again, it is said in the book of Judges, that, when there was no king or chief magistrate in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes. But had there been a national court possessing a jurisdiction and authority paramount to those of the monarch, the want of such an officer could not have been assigned as the cause of universal disorder and relaxation of morals.

A similar conclusion has been drawn from the means which the Levite adopted to obtain redress for the wrongs which were inflicted upon him by the men of Gibeah. He sent an account of the trespass not to the Sanhedrim, the proper court for judging and punishing such offences, but to the twelve tribes of Israel spread over the whole extent of the country,—a circumstance which will satisfy every candid reader that, at the period in question, no such court existed among the Hebrews.*

It does not, therefore, admit of any doubt, that the Sanhedrim, so much lauded by the Jews, had no existence at the early period of their history which falls under our consideration. Calmet justly observes, that the antiquity of this Rabbinical establishment is altogether fabulous; that the prerogatives which they ascribe to it, as well as the most part of the rules which they assign for its direction in the administration of justice, are very ill-founded and extremely uncertain. The real Sanhedrim had its origin in the time of the Maccabees; acquired strength and consistency under the Asmonæan sovereigns; and at length rose to such a degree of authority as to become formidable even to those kings themselves.†

* Jennings, Jewish Antiquities, p. 27. Michaelis, vol. i. p. 247—249. Origines Hebrææ, vol. i. p. 56.

† Calmet, Dissertation sur la Police des Hebreux; et Dictionnaire, sous le mot *Juge*.

The only national council, indeed, of which, at the period in question, we can discover any evidence, is the occasional meetings of the princes of tribes and patriarchal chiefs to transact business of great public importance. Thus, in the case of the Benjamite war, of which we have a full account in the book of Judges, we are informed, that the heads "of all the tribes, even of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God." On that memorable occasion the interests and character of the whole Hebrew commonwealth were at stake; for which reason the natural leaders of the tribes gathered themselves together at the head of their kinsmen and followers; even four hundred thousand men that drew the sword; in order to consult with one another, and to adopt such measures as might be deemed most suitable for punishing the atrocities which had been committed at Gibeah.

IV. During the period in which the early part of our narrative is placed, the supreme power among the Hebrews was exercised by Judges,—an order of magistrates to which nothing precisely similar is to be found in any other country. The Carthaginians, indeed, had a description of rulers, whose name, being derived from the same oriental term, appears to establish some resemblance in their office to that of the successors of Joshua.* But it will be found, upon a comparison of their authority, both in its origin and the purposes to which it was meant to be subservient, that the Hebrew judges and the suffites of Carthage had very little in common.

Nor do we find any closer analogy in the duties of a Grecian archon or of a Roman consul. These were ordinary

* שופטים *Sophetim*, *Suffites*. Livii Hist. lib. xxviii. 37, lib. xxx. 7. Bochart, Geog. Sacra, part ii. lib. 1, 24.

magistrates, and periodically elected; whereas the judge was never invested with power, except when the exigencies of public affairs required the aid of extraordinary talents or the weight of a supernatural appointment. On this account, the Hebrew commander has been likened to the Roman dictator; who, when the commonwealth was in danger, was intrusted with an authority almost unlimited, and with a jurisdiction which extended to the lives and fortunes of nearly all his countrymen. But in one important particular this similarity fails. The dictator laid down his office as soon as the crisis which had called for its exercise was passed away; and in no circumstances was he entitled to retain such unwonted supremacy beyond a limited time.* The judge, on the other hand, remained invested with his high authority during the full period of his life; and is, therefore, usually described, by the sacred historian, as presiding to the end of his days over the tribes of Israel, amid the peace and security which his military skill and counsels, aided by the blessing of Heaven, had restored to their land.

The permanence of the judge's office has indeed been disputed by Godwyn; but on very insufficient grounds, as will appear from an examination of the only case to which he refers for authority. "The judges," says he, "were like unto kings when once they were elected; but there were long vacancies and chasms commonly between the cessation of the one and the election of the other: yea, for the most part, the people never chose a judge but in time of great troubles and imminent dangers, *which being overpast, he retired to a private life.* After that Gideon had delivered the people out of the hands of the Midianites, he

* Livii Hist. ix. 34.

being offered the kingdom, replied, 'I will not reign over you, neither shall my child reign over you.' That of Samuel, that he judged Israel all his life, was extraordinary. In this respect, their judges symbolized with the Roman dictators."*

The case of Gideon, it is maintained, affords no countenance to the opinion which is here founded upon it; for the office which he refused in his own name and that of his son, was not the office of judge merely; it was the nomination of his family to a hereditary and permanent power over all the tribes of the Hebrews. "Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou and thy son, and thy son's son also; for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you." In short, the gratitude of the Israelites prompted them to raise their deliverer to the sovereign authority, and to invest him, as some of them shortly afterwards invested his son Abimelech, with the power and title of a king.†

That such was their object is perfectly clear, as well from the language which they addressed to Gideon, as from the answer which they received from him. They invited him not to be their judge simply, but to be their ruler; and though the term which they used does not directly imply the regal office, it must have conveyed to his ear the offer of a kind and degree of authority, which he knew to be entirely incompatible with the peculiar allegiance which the Hebrews at that time professed to Jehovah as their king.‡

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* Moses and Aaron, lib. i. p. 2. Judges viii. 23. 1 Samuel vii. 15.

† Judges ix. 6.

‡ The Hebrew verb which expresses the functions of a judge, such as Deborah or Samuel, is שפט. But when the men of Israel addressed Gideon, they employed the word משל; saying, משל בשנ נמ אריזה נמ במכ נמ בן בנך.

In declining the honour which was thus placed within his reach, it is not, therefore, to be inferred, that the conqueror of the Midianites refused to exercise, for the behoof of his people, that species of rule, or superintendence, which appears in all cases to have followed the more brilliant exploits of the judges against the public enemy, in the field of battle.

It is stated, no doubt, by the sacred historian, that "the son of Joash went and dwelt in his own house."* But this turn of expression does not import that Gideon retired altogether from the management of public affairs. All the judges, as well as he, administered the government at the place of their private residence; Samuel at Ramah, and Deborah under her palm-tree in mount Ephraim: and that he continued to retain, till the day of his death, the power conferred upon him by the angel of the Lord, is manifest from the narrative in which his brief biography is handed down to us. We are told, that "the country was in quietness forty years *in the days of Gideon*",—a form of words which would have no meaning, were we to suppose that, during the long period now mentioned, he was unknown to his contemporaries otherwise than as a private individual.† The dissolution of manners, too, which took place immediately after his death, is attributed by the sacred writer to the loss of his example and authority. For "it came pass, says he, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their God."‡

Nor was it till after the event now stated, that Abime-

Le Clerc observes, in regard to the term משל, which he translates *Dominare*, "quâ voce non significatur quævis potestas, qualis est inferiorum magistratuum, sed potestas summa et regia. Ceteroqui Gedehon, ad mortem usque, Israelitis jus dixit.

* Judges viii. 29. † Judges viii. 28. ‡ Judges viii. 33.

lech, the son of this distinguished warrior, regarded the government as vacant, and planned the atrocious crime whereby he raised himself to a short and very precarious authority over Israel. It was not till the demise of Gideon, that the young man just named "went unto Shechem, unto his mother's brethren, and communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying, Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, Whether is better for you, either that all the sons of Jerubbaal, which are threescore and ten persons, reign over you, or that one reign over you? remember also that I am your bone and your flesh."*

From these facts, it must be evident that the administration of Gideon expired only with his life,—an opinion which is generally entertained by the learned both of ancient and more modern times. The authority of Godwyn in such matters is unquestionably great; and it was chiefly the consideration which is attached to his name, by every student of Hebrew antiquities, that induced me to enter into the train of reasoning now submitted to the reader. Whatever degree of obscurity may exist as to the limits and object of the peculiar magistracy which was exercised by the judges, from the demise of Joshua down to the reign of Saul, there can be no doubt that their official power subsisted long after the particular occasions which called it into existence; and that, in this respect, they did not symbolize with the Roman dictators, whose extraordinary command was bounded by the period of six months.

It is in vain that we search for any fixed principle, the knowledge of which would throw light on the circumstances which may be supposed to have determined the election of the judges; and which might enable us to

* Judges ix. 1, 2.

explain the grounds of the particular authority, in virtue of which they performed the various duties belonging to their high office. In general, it may be said, that they derived their appointment from a divine commission, either impressed upon their minds by a supernatural impulse, or conveyed to them formally by the mouth of a prophet. For example, in the case of Othniel, the first of this class of rulers, the sacred historian informs us, that when the Hebrews were oppressed by Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, they cried unto the Lord: and the Lord raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. And the spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war.*

A similar calamity called for the administration of Ehud the Benjamite; for it was not until after his countrymen had served Eglon, the king of Moab, eighteen years, that Jehovah "raised him up as a deliverer."† In such instances, the people of Israel may be understood to have simply acquiesced in the nomination of their champion, when he first called them to arms under the banner of Jehovah; and to have looked for the proof of his divine authority in the success which they expected to follow his plans, for the re-establishment of their freedom and the discomfiture of their enemies.

But the appointment of Deborah, the prophetess, must be traced to a different origin. She appears to have filled the chair of the judge during part of the servitude under Jabin, king of Canaan; for, if we may draw any inference from the connection of the sacred narrative, it was while the children of Israel were mightily oppressed by the powerful prince just named, that they were in the

* Judges iii. 8, 9, 10. † Judges iii. 15.

practice of going up to her for judgment.* The wife of Lapidoth must, therefore, have owed her elevation to the sanctity of her character as an inspired person, as well as to her knowledge and wisdom, as one who interpreted the law and awarded justice impartially; and it was unquestionably in the exercise of the power which these qualities had gained for her, that she summoned Barak, from his retreat at Kedesh-naphtali, to take the command of the army which was destined to recover the freedom of his nation.

The call of Gideon was attended with several miracles,—a manifestation of supernatural power, which was not less necessary to confirm the mind of the son of Joash himself, whose modesty at first opposed an obstacle to the divine intentions, than to assure the tribes of Israel that their deliverer was, indeed, chosen from a humble family in Manasseh.† But when, on the other hand, we turn to Jephthah the Gileadite, we find, that the arrangements which preceded his acceptance of the military command, against the army of the king of Ammon, were entirely of a secular description. The Israelites had already assembled themselves together, and encamped in Mizpeh; when, diffident of the ability of their chiefs for conducting so important a war, the people and princes of Gilead said one to another, "What man is he that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead." Jephthah, at this period, expelled from home by the jealousies of his brethren, was captain of a band of freebooters in the land of Tob. And it was so, that, when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob. And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of

* Judges iv. 3, 4, 5. † Judges vii. 11—16.

Ammon, and the Lord deliver them before me, shall I be your head? And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, the Lord be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words. Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpeh.*

This compact between Jephthah and the Gileadites, presents nothing that is not strictly conformable to the most ordinary views and motives which mix in the intercourse of human life. The latter engaged the services of a chief accustomed to the fatigues and danger of war; promising a recompense suitable at once to the character of the man whom they addressed, and to the maxims of the times in which he lived. Religion appears not to have had any share in the negotiation; and were it not that the chosen captain is described as "uttering all his words before the Lord in Mizpeh," we should have been left in doubt respecting his theological principles, as well as in regard to the divine sanction under which he proceeded to rescue the children of Israel from the hands of their enemies.

But Samson, whose conduct exhibits much more to excite our surprise than to promote our edification, was consecrated from his birth to the labours of a patriot.† Of the other judges, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, the sacred record communicates so very few particulars, that we are equally ignorant of the circumstances which opened up for them the path to the chief magistracy, and of the events which distinguished their several administrations. In general, we find that they were men of wealth,‡

* Judges x. 17, 18, and xi. 5, 6, 9, 10, 11.

† Judges xiii. 5.

‡ Judges xii. 9, 14.

and we may presume that they were esteemed for their wisdom and justice; but in respect to the manner in which they were called to the exercise of a power so nearly allied to that of an absolute king, the inspired writer has conveyed to us no information. As the office originated in the necessities of the state, it may be inferred, that it was only in troublous times that the princes of the tribes and heads of families consented to surrender their hereditary influence into the hands of a single ruler.

As the judge was only an occasional governor, and was allowed in all cases to act according to the nature of the exigency which had called for his aid, we shall find it as difficult to determine the limits of his official authority, as it was to ascertain the mode in which the people at large sanctioned his appointment. The obscurity connected with this investigation is still farther increased by the circumstance, that, in some instances, as the services of the judge were local, his jurisdiction must, at the first at least, have been equally limited.

For example, Jephthah was invited by the chiefs of a certain district only, to assume the direction of the war which they were about to wage with the Ammonites; and his ambition at that moment did not aspire to any object more elevated than to be the head of the inhabitants of Gilead. Samson, again, appears to have confined his inroads to the borders of the Philistines; and, if we restrict our conclusions to the bare record of the sacred historian, we must acknowledge that the exploits and reputation of this mighty man of valour were not known on the banks of Jordan. Yet, of both these worthies, it is said that they "judged Israel," the one six, and the other twenty years,—a notice which, in reference to them, could, we may rest assured, mean nothing more than that they were directed by the providence of Jehovah to achieve, during

their respective times, the only exploits which were undertaken for the independence of the Hebrews. They were regarded as champions of the Lord's people; as actuated by a divine spirit; as enjoying the assistance and blessing of the God of Jacob; and, on these accounts, deserving of all the honour which belonged to the military head of the Israelitish commonwealth.

As to Eli and Samuel, we can be at no loss to discover a broader principle to support their authority. They combined in their sacred characters the two offices which, in a simple state of society, command most readily the veneration and obedience of mankind; the one being high priest, and the other an inspired prophet of the Lord. Nor was it in those early days deemed inconsistent with the sanctity of the priesthood to bear arms in defence of the public peace; and thereby to secure the confidence of the people, by displaying in the camp, or even in the field, those qualities of courage and disinterestedness upon which their liberty at home and their estimation in other countries were found to have their main dependence. Hophni and Phinehas, the licentious sons of Eli, died in battle while fighting to save the ark of God from falling into the hands of the Philistines; and by their death in so good a cause, they have created for their memory, in the breasts of the pious and patriotic, a sentiment of pity and even of esteem, which was not due to any part of their professional lives.*

The judge, then, it is clear, "was a magistrate of great service in uniting the counsels and forces of the Hebrew nation; and what may deserve a particular reflection, a magistrate of such authority as was sufficient to prevent any ambitious designs of any other magistrates, how great

* 1 Samuel iv. 17.

or powerful soever, from taking place; whether of the princes of the tribes, or of any of the more powerful tribes, or of the high priest, whatever ye will suppose their authority to be. For the chief authority, both in affairs of war and peace, being lodged in his hands, all other persons were under obligations of obedience to him; and contumacious disobedience to him was a capital crime by the constitution. And as he had the chief command of all Israel as an army, what ambitious views could he put in execution without a general revolt of all the tribes, hardly possible when the tribes were under the command of different princes, who could have no common interests or ambition to unite them, but must rather have opposite interests and ambition, unless they should be united in preservation of the constitution and the common national liberty, if the judge should attempt to stretch his power and authority beyond the legal bounds set to it by the constitution.

"Yet, on the other hand, this constitution has taken the utmost care, and with all the marks of political wisdom, that the judge should not have it in his power to stretch his authority beyond its legal bounds; for his authority was tempered by the oracle, and by the advice and consent of the Hebrew senate and people. He had no power to alter or change any laws, nor to make any new ones, as occasion might offer, to strengthen his interest, or to repeal any old law that might stand in his way. The very persons who had the rank of his counsellors were commanders of the hosts of Israel; and the whole army of Israel consisted of none but the freeholders of Israel. There was no such thing as a soldiery, either of men or officers, who were enlisted for pay; nor had the judge any thing to pay them with, if there had been any to be hired. No Israelite, by the constitution, could in-

crease his estate, in virtue of the universal and perpetual agrarian law: and no man could make a great estate any other way, in a country where there was no foreign trade, and where interest of money, if any one could be supposed to have much, was most strictly prohibited; and when, finally, he could not, on any pretence whatsoever, raise money by a tax on the people. For the people were liable to no taxes, but what they paid by the original constitution to the temple and Levites; which was the whole public revenue and civil list of the Hebrew government."*

The Hebrew judges, says Dupin, were not ordinary magistrates, but men raised up by God, on whom the Israelites bestowed the chief government, either because they had delivered them from the oppressions under which they groaned, or because of their prudence and approved probity. The judges ruled according to the laws of God; commanded their armies; made treaties with the neighbouring princes; declared war and peace, and administered justice. They were different from kings,

1st, In that they were not established either by election or succession, but raised up in an extraordinary manner.

2d, In that they refused to take upon them the title and quality of king.

3d, In that they levied no taxes on the people for the maintenance of government.

4th, In their manner of living, which was very far from the ostentation and pomp of the regal state.

5th, In that they could make no new laws, but governed according to the statutes contained in the books of Moses.

* Lowman on the Civil Government of the Hebrews, chap. x.

6th, In that the obedience paid to them by the people was voluntary and unforced; being, at most, no more than consuls and supreme magistrates of free cities.*

But it is less difficult to determine what the judges were not, than to ascertain with accuracy the various parts of their complicated office. In war, they led the host of Israel to meet their enemies; and in peace, they presided, it is probable, in such courts of judicature as might be found necessary for deciding upon intricate points of law, or for hearing appeals from inferior tribunals. Those who went up to Deborah for judgment, had, we may presume, brought their causes, in the first instance, before the judges of their respective cities; and it was only in cases where greater knowledge and a higher authority were required to give satisfaction to the litigants, that the chief magistrate of the republic, aided by the principal members of the priesthood, was likely to be called upon to pronounce a *final* decision.

V. It belongs to this part of the subject to mention the provision which was made by Moses and established by Joshua, for the due administration of justice throughout all the land. Judges and officers, said the former, shalt thou make thee in all thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment: thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.† To the same purpose, Josephus relates, in his abridged account of the address made

* Complete History of the Canon, book i. c. 3d. sect. 3.
† Deuteronomy xvi. 18, 19, 20.

to the Hebrews by Moses immediately before his death, that this great legislator gave instructions that seven judges should be appointed in every city; men who had distinguished themselves by their good conduct and love of justice. Let those that judge, he adds, be permitted to determine, according as they think right, unless any one can show that they have taken bribes to the perversion of justice, or can allege any other accusation against them.*

Between the Judges and the Officers nominated by the Jewish lawgiver, there was no doubt a marked distinction; though, from the remote antiquity of the appointment, and the obscure commentaries of the Rabbinical writers, it has become extremely difficult to define the limits of their respective functions. Maimonides asserts, that in every city where the number of householders, or rather perhaps of male inhabitants who had attained the age of maturity, amounted to a hundred and twenty, there was a court consisting of twenty-three judges, who were empowered to pass judgment in almost all causes both civil criminal.‡ This is unquestionably the same institution which is mentioned by Josephus in the fourth book of his Antiquities, and which is described by him as being composed of seven judges, and fourteen subordinate officers or assistants, selected from among the Levites; for these, with the president and his deputy, make up the sum of twenty-three, specified by the Jewish writers.§ In smaller towns, the administration of law was intrusted to three judges; whose authority extended to the determination of all questions respecting debt, theft, rights of inheritance, restitution and compensation. Though they could not inflict capital punishments, they had power to visit minor

* Josephus, Antiquities, book iv. c. 8.
† In Sanhed. c. 5. Lewis, Origines Hebrææ, book i. c. 6.
‡ Jos. Antiq. lib. iv. c. 8.

offences with scourging and fines, according to the nature of the delinquency, and the amount of the injury sustained.*

Of the former of these judicial establishments, there were two appointed at Jerusalem, even during the period that the Sanhedrim of Seventy was invested with the supreme authority over the lives and fortunes of their countrymen; one of which sat in the gate of Shusan, and the other in the gate of Nicanor. In regard to these consistories, it may be worth while to mention, on the faith of Maimonides, that each of them had three forms of probationers, every form containing twenty-three individuals; and when there was a vacancy in the court, the highest in the first form was admitted and made a judge. Upon this preferment, the highest in the second form came in, and sat lowest in the first form; and the highest in the third form came up, and sat lowest in the second; while, to keep up the regular number, a new man was admitted and placed lowest in the third form.

We are told by the same author, that the advancement of the judges into the supreme court of the Seventy was first by degrees, through the two inferior consistories which were established at Jerusalem. Whosoever, says he, was found of competent qualifications, was first made a judge in his own city; and from thence was promoted into the judicatory of the gate of the Mountain of the house; from thence into the judicatory of the gate of the Court; and so at last into the great Sanhedrim. These consistories, he adds, always sat in the gates of their cities.†

* Reland. Antiq. Sac. Pars ii. c. 7.

† Le lieu où ces juges tenoient leur audience, étoit la porte de la ville; car comme les Israelites etoient tous des laboureurs qui sortoient le matin pour aller a leur travail, et ne rentroient que le soir, la porte de la ville etoit le lieu ou ils se rencontroient le plus; et il ne faut pas s'etonner qu'ils travaillassent

Their session began after morning prayers, and continued till the end of the sixth hour, or twelve o'clock; and their authority, though not in capital cases, continued to be respected by the Israelites long after Jerusalem was levelled with the ground.*

In the times of the judges, when the Sanhedrim did not exist, it is very probable that there was no appeal to any permanent court superior to the civic consistories described by Josephus. If the chief magistrate, in those days, possessed ability or inclination for legal inquiries, the people, it is to be presumed, would repair to him for judgment in all difficult cases; but, in general, from the trouble and expense of a long journey, the members of the remoter tribes would find it expedient to remain satisfied with the decision of their local judges.

VI. The necessity of a national tribunal would be most urgently felt in such causes as involved the interests of several tribes; for as these bodies had no power or jurisdiction over one another, their disputes, whenever they happened to arise, could not be determined except by some common umpire, whose authority was every where acknowledged. Selden gives on this head the opinion of the most learned lawyers among the Jews:—"Neque opinor, dubitandum est, quin tribus quælibet quoties de rebus tribuariis disceptandum, decernendumque sit, non minori alicui, sed synedrio magno subesset. Non

aux champs, et demeurassent dans les villes. Ce n'etoient pas des villes comme nos capitales des provinces, qui peuvent a peine subsister de ce qui leur fournissent vingt or trente livres de pays tout a l'entour. C'etoient des habitations d'autant de laboureurs qu'il en falloit pour cultiver les terres les plus proches; de-la vient que le pays etant fort peuplé, elles etoient en tres grand nombre. Pour une raison semblable, chez les Grecs et les Romains, les rendez-vous pour toutes les affaires etoit le marché ou la place, parcequ'ils etoient tous marchands.—*Fleury, Mœurs des Israelites*, XXV.

* Lewis, Origines Hebrææ, Book i. c. 6.

enim erant omnino, res alterius tribus, ab alterius judicibus decidendæ."*

The few notices which remain to us of the government exercised by the judges, do not warrant any general conclusions, in regard to the precise object of the federal union, which must, even in their days, have subsisted among the Hebrew tribes. We see much more distinctly that every city possessed the means of regulating its own affairs, and of providing for the defence of the community in whose domains it was placed. For example, the elders of Gilead felt themselves authorised to propose terms to Jephthah, and even to confer upon him the command of the confederated army, prepared to march against the Midianites.† In like manner, we find that there were in Succoth, functionaries of the same class, who represented the people, and acted for them, too, on a very important occasion; the number, according to the sacred historian, being not less than threescore and seventeen men.‡ The transaction, again, which took place before the elders of Bethlehem, where Boaz had his accustomed residence, affords additional support to the same views; and exhibits to us, moreover, an interesting specimen of the peculiar kind of government which subsisted among the families of Israel, at that remote period so remarkably distinguished by faithfulness and simplicity.§

With the aid of the particulars stated above, the reader may have been enabled to form some notion of the civil and political circumstances of the ancient Hebrews. They enjoyed the utmost degree of freedom that was consistent with the objects of regular society; acknowledging no authority but that of the laws as administered by the

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* Selden de Synod. lib. iii. c. 4.
† Judges xi. 5, 6.
‡ Judges viii. 14.
§ Ruth iv. 2. 4. 9.

elders of their tribes, and the heads of their families. The equality of their property too, and the sameness of their occupations, precluded the rise of those distinctions in social life, which, whatever may be their use in older nations, are opposed by all the habits of a people whose sole cares are as yet devoted to the culture of their fields and the safety of their flocks. The form of government which suits best with such a distribution of wealth and employment, is unquestionably that which was established by Moses on the basis of the ancient patriarchal rule; which, however, is found to be imperceptibly modified by the increasing power and intelligence of the people at large, until, as happened towards the close of Samuel's administration, the public voice makes itself be heard, recommending a departure from obsolete maxims. Thus we find, in the progress of society, that the simple authority of the family-chief passes through a species of oligarchy, into a practical democracy, and ends, at no very distant period, in the nomination of an hereditary sovereign.

But in the age of the Hebrew judges, we perceive not the slightest trace of those distinctions of rank which spring from wealth, office, or profession. From the princes of Judah, down to the meanest family in Benjamin, all were agriculturists or shepherds; driving their own oxen, and attending in person on their sheep and goats. The hospitable Ephraimite, who received into his house at Gibeah the Levite and his unfortunate partner, is described as "an old man coming from his work out of the field at even."* Gideon, again, was threshing his corn with his own hands, when the angel announced to him that he was selected by Divine Providence to be the

* Judges xix. 16.

deliverer of his people.* Boaz was attending his reapers in the field, when his benevolence was awakened in favour of Ruth, the widow of his kinsman. When Saul received the news of the danger which threatened the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead, he was in the act of coming "after the herd out of the field." Sovereign, as he was, he thought it not inconsistent with his rank to drive a yoke of oxen. Every one knows that David was employed in keeping the sheep when he was summoned into the presence of Samuel to be anointed king over Israel; and even when he was upon the throne, and had, by his talents and bravery, extended at once the power and the reputation of his countrymen among the neighbouring nations, the annual occupation of sheepshearing called his sons and daughters into the hill country, to take their share in its toils and amusements.†

At that early period, all the wealth and consideration of the Hebrews were connected with their fields and their flocks. In point of blood and ancestry, every descendant of Jacob was held on the same footing; and the only ground of superiority which one man could claim over another, was connected with old age, wisdom, strength, or courage,—the qualities most respected in the original forms of civilized life. We may observe one instance illustrative of the feeling of equality and the simplicity of manners which prevailed among the Israelites about the commencement of the regal government, in the case of David when he visited his brethren who were serving in the army under Saul. The father of the youth intrusted him with a message, and some provisions to carry to the camp. "Take now, said he, an ephah of this parched

* Judges vi. 12. † 2 Samuel xiii. 23, 24.

corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; and carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand." After the stripling had slain the gigantic Goliah, the king put a question to him respecting his family. He answered this interrogatory by stating, that he was the son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite; proceeding on the assumption that his father's name could not be unknown to Saul.*

The epoch at which we are called upon, at present, to contemplate the Hebrew community, is that very interesting one at which the wandering shepherd settles down into the stationary husbandman. The progeny of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who themselves were pastoral chiefs, appear to have retained a decided predilection for that ancient mode of life. Moses, even when he had brought the twelve tribes within sight of the promised land, found it necessary to indulge the families of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, so far as to give them the choice of a settlement beyond the Jordan, where they might devote themselves to the keeping of cattle. From the conduct of the other tribes, who showed no small reluctance to divide the land and enter upon their several inheritances, it has been concluded, with considerable probability, that they, too, would have preferred the erratic habits of their ancestors to the more restricted pursuits which their great lawgiver had prepared for them, amid corn fields, vineyards, and plantations of olive.† And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?

* 1 Samuel xvii. 58.

† Michaelis' Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, Art. xliv. and Joshua xxii.

Among the Arabs, the pastoral life is still accounted more noble than such occupations as lead to a residence in towns or even in villages. They think it, as Arvieux observes, more congenial to liberty; because the man who with his herds ranges the deserts at large, will be far less likely to submit to oppression than people with houses and lands. This mode of thinking is of great antiquity in the eastern parts of the world. Diodorus Siculus, when speaking of the Nabathæans in Arabia, relates, that they were, by their laws, prohibited from sowing, planting, drinking wine, and building houses; every violation of the precept being punishable with death. The reason assigned for this very singular legislation is, their belief that those who possess such things will be easily brought into subjection by a tyrant; on which account they continue, says the historian, to traverse the desert, feeding their flocks, which consist partly of camels and partly of sheep.*

The fact now stated receives a striking confirmation from the notice contained in the book of Jeremiah respecting the Rechabites; who, though they had for several ages been removed from Arabia into Palestine, persevered in a sacred obedience to the command of their ancestor, who forbade them to build houses, sow land, plant vineyards, or drink wine, but to dwell in tents, throughout all their generations.†

In regard to these points, the Hebrews are thought to have entertained sentiments and desires not very different

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* Νομος δ' ἐστὶ αὐτοῖς μητε σιτον σπειρειν μητε φυτευειν μηδεν φυτον καρποφορον, μητε οἰνῳ χρησθαι, μητε οικιαν κατασκευαζειν. Ὃς δ' αν παρα ταυτα ποιῶν ἐυρισκηται, θανατον αυτῷ προστιμον εἶναι. Χρωνται δι τῳ νομῳ τουτῳ, διαλαμβανοντες τους ταυτα κτωμενους ἀναγκασθησεσθαι ῥαδιως ὑπο των δυνατων ἑνεκα τῆς τουτων χρειας, ποιειν το προσταττομενον.—*Diod. Sic.*, lib. xix. c. 94.

† Jeremiah xxxv. 1—11.

from those of the Arabs. The life of a migratory shepherd, too, has a close alliance with the habits of a freebooter; and the attentive reader of the ancient history of the Israelites will recollect many instances, wherein the descendants of Isaac gave ample proof of their relationship to the posterity of Ismael. Among the people of Arabia the profession of a robber has at no time been accounted dishonourable. The courage and dexterity which such a life requires stand high in the estimation of tribes who are almost constantly in a state of war; and of whom we may still speak in the language originally applied to their progenitor, whose hand, it was predicted, should be against every man, and every man's hand against him.*

The character of Abimelech, the son of Gideon, cannot appear to the reader in any other light than that of a leader of marauders. The men of Shechem, whom he had hired to follow him, refused not to obey his commands, even when he added murder to robbery. His disorderly bands, equally violent and faithless, are described as lurking in the mountains, and plundering all that came along that way.† Jephthah, in like manner, when he was thrust out by his brethren, became a captain of freebooters in the land of Tob; "and there were gathered vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him."‡ But the elders of Gilead did not, on that account, regard their countryman as less worthy to assume the direction of their affairs, and to be made head over all the inhabitants of their land,—an honour which he even hesitated to accept at their hands, when compared with the rank and emolument of the situation which they requested him to relinquish.

Nor did David, the anointed king of Israel, think it

* Judges xiv. 1. † Judges ix. 4. 25. ‡ Judges xi. 3.

unsuitable to his high prospects to have recourse for a time to a predatory life. When compelled to flee from the presence of Saul, he took refuge in the cave of Adullam; "and every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men."* It has been suggested, indeed, that the son of Jesse employed his arms against such persons only as were enemies to the Hebrews. But there is no good ground for this distinction. His conduct to Nabal, whose possessions were in Carmel, prove, that, when his camp was destitute of provisions, he deemed it no violation of honour to force a supply for the wants of his men, even from the stores of a friendly house. "And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep. And David did send out ten young men; and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name: And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be to all that thou hast. And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now, thy shepherds that were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them all the while they were in Carmel. Ask thy young men, and they will show thee: wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes; for we come in a good day: Give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David. And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased. And Nabal answered David's ser-

* 1 Samuel xxii. 1, 2.

vants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be? So David's young men turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings. And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men, and two hundred abode by the stuff."*

The wise precaution adopted by Abigail saved the life of Nabal and of his household. This David himself acknowledged in his conversation with the wife of the Maonite; for, said he to her at their meeting, "blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou which has kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand. For in very deed, as the Lord God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left to Nabal by the morning light a single man to serve him in the tent or in the field."

I have collected these fragments of personal history, in order to throw a few rays of light upon the state of society which characterized the era of the Hebrew commonwealth. That the times in which the judges ruled were barbarous and unsettled, is rendered manifest not less by the general tenor of events, than by the qualities which predominated in the public mind during the long period

* 1 Samuel xxv. 4—14.

from Joshua to the reign of Solomon. But although a considerable portion of that interval was spent in war, the new inhabitants of Canaan appear, on many occasions, to have lived with the old, on terms of friendly intercourse, or, at least, of mutual forbearance.

In defiance of the prohibition imposed by Moses, they entered into alliances with them; and not only took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, but even served their gods.* Nor did the terrors of political subjection oppose a lasting obstacle to this intermixture of families and of faith. It was during the ascendency of the Philistines that Samson went down to Timnath in search of a wife; and his conduct in this respect, excited among his relatives no other surprise than that he should have preferred to his own countrywomen a damsel from among their most constant and formidable enemies.† In like manner, we find that while the lords of Gaza and Askelon exercised over the Hebrews a wanton and very oppressive domination, the latter, nevertheless, were in the practice of going "down to the Philistines to sharpen, every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock."‡

The affecting story of Ruth, too, lends an additional confirmation to the views now stated respecting the intercourse between the Hebrews and their neighbours, the more ancient occupiers of the soil. "It came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land; and a certain man of Bethlehem-Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons." Upon the death of this Bethlehemite, his sons married in their adopted country, and received such an

* Judges iii. 6. † Judges xiv. 1. ‡ 1 Samuel xiii. 20.

inheritance among the children of Moab as enabled them to maintain their families in comfort and security as long as they lived. Naomi, when become a widow and childless, gave way to the desire of returning into her native province; and having heard that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread, she went forth to return into the land of Judah.*

Again, when David found it necessary to conceal himself from the fury of Saul, he repaired to "Mizpeh of Moab; and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth and be with you, till I know what God will do for me. And he brought them before the king of Moab; and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the cave."†

It is probable, that many others besides the husband of Naomi migrated to the country of Moab, in order to avoid the pressure of the famine with which the southern tribes were afflicted. Nor does it appear that any prohibition existed against the reception of such Hebrew exiles, though belonging to a people whose policy and constitution were avowedly opposed to the very principles on which the Moabite kingdom was established, and who, in fact, were destined to accomplish its overthrow.‡ In a word, the Canaanitish nations showed a degree of liberality and forbearance towards the invaders of their land, not very consistent with the fears which the latter excited, when advancing under the command of Joshua, nor with the intentions which they entertained, at that period, in regard to the ultimate object of their military enterprise. Such a state of things can only be accounted for, on the supposition either that Divine Providence restrained the

* Ruth i. 1—8. † 1 Samuel xxii. 3, 4. ‡ Numbers xxiv. 17.

wrath and suspicion of the surrounding idolaters, as the fury of the lions was subdued in the den at Babylon; or that the peaceful and rather unwarlike habits of the Hebrews had removed all apprehension from the minds of their neighbours, and made them cease to regard their views as ambitious or formidable.

These notices, gleaned from the field of sacred history, convey to us some degree of information in regard to the political relations of society among the Syrian tribes prior to the commencement of kingly government at Jerusalem. The wars which were carried on at that early period, seem not to have been waged with any intention of permanent conquest, or even of territorial aggrandizement; but merely to revenge an insult, to impose tribute, or to carry away slaves and cattle. The history of the judges supplies no facts which would lead us to infer, that, during any of the servitudes which, for their repeated transgressions, were inflicted on the Hebrews, their land was taken from them or their cities destroyed by their conquerors. It was not till a later age, that a more systematic plan of conquest was formed by the powerful princes who governed beyond the Euphrates and the Tigris; and who, not content with the uncertain submission of tributaries, resolved to reduce the Israelites for ever to the condition of subjects or of bondmen.

VII. The account which has been given of the civil and political constitution of the Hebrews would not be complete, were I to omit all notice of the tribe of Levi, the duties and revenues of which were fixed by peculiar laws. It may perhaps be thought by some readers, that this institution was more spiritual than civil; but it will be found, upon suitable inquiry, that the Levitical offices comprehended a great variety of avocations much more closely connected with secular life than with the ministry

of the tabernacle, or with more attendance on the priesthood. This sacred tribe, indeed, supplied to the whole nation of the Israelites, their judges, lawyers, scribes, teachers, and physicians; for Moses, in imitation of the Egyptians, in whose wisdom he was early and deeply instructed, had thought proper to make the learned professions hereditary in the several families of Levi's descendants.

We find in the first chapter of the book of Numbers, the command of Almighty God to separate the tribe now mentioned from the rest of their brethren, and not to enrol them amongst those who were to engage in war. Thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel: But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle and all the vessels thereof, and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle. And when the tabernacle setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.*

It was determined by the same authority, that the children of Levi were to have no inheritance in the land, like the other tribes, but were to receive from their brethren, in name of maintenance, a tenth part of the gross produce of their fields and vineyards.† The occupations for which they were set apart were altogether incompatible with the pursuits of agriculture or the feeding of cattle. It was deemed expedient, therefore, that they should be relieved from the cares and toil connected with the possession of land, and devote their whole attention to the

* Numbers i. 49, 50, 51. † Numbers xviii. 21. 24. 26.

service of the altar and the instruction of the people. They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, said Moses in his last public address to Heaven, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar.*

To effect these wise purposes, it was necessary that the Levites should not be confined to one particular district of the country; but that they should be distributed among all the tribes, according to the extent of their several inheritances and the amount of their population. With this view the law provided that a certain number of cities should be set apart for them, together with such a portion of land as seemed requisite for their comfort and more immediate wants. "Command the children of Israel that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession, cities to dwell in; and ye shall also give unto the Levites, suburbs for the cities round about them. And ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits; and the city shall be in the midst: this shall be to them the suburbs of the cities. So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be forty and eight cities: them shall ye give with their suburbs. And the cities which ye shall give shall be of the possession of the children of Israel: from them that have many ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few: every one shall give of his cities unto the Levites according to his inheritance which he inheriteth."†

It was not till after the conquest and division of Canaan, that the provisions of this enactment were practically ful-

* Deut. xxxiii. 10. † Numbers xxxv. 5. 7, 8.

filled. When the other tribes were settled in their respective possessions, "then came near the heads of the fathers of the Levites unto Eleazar the priest, and unto Joshua the son of Nun, and unto the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel: And they spake unto them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, The Lord commanded by the hand of Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle."* The truth and justice of this appeal being admitted, the dwellings of the Levites were allotted as follows:—

In the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin,	13
In Ephraim, Dan, and half tribe of Manasseh,	10
In the other half tribe of Manasseh, Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali,	13
In Zebulun, Reuben, and Gad,	12
	48

Assuming that the cubit was a foot and a half in length, the extent of land appropriated to every Levitical city must have been about eight hundred acres. It is true, there is a variation in the language used by the inspired penman on this head, which has not been fully explained, and which probably cannot be satisfactorily accounted for in any other way than by supposing that some ancient transcriber has unintentionally altered the numbers. In the fourth verse, the command of Jehovah is expressed in these terms: "And the suburbs of the cities, which ye shall give unto the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about."

* Joshua xxii. 4, 5, 6, 7.

But it is immediately subjoined in the following verse, "And ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits; and the city shall be in the midst."*

It has been inferred by the greater number of writers on this subject, that the meaning of the Divine legislator was, that the two thousand cubits should be measured from a station at the centre of the city towards the four cardinal points; and that the one thousand cubits should commence at the wall which surrounded the city on the east, west, north, and south. Menochius, for example, in his tract *De Republica Hebræorum*, has given a plan of the Levitical cities, with their suburban lands; in forming which, he has proceeded on the assumption, that the two thousand cubits mentioned by Moses were measured from a central point in the interior of every such city, and, consequently, that the cities themselves were just a thousand cubits square.†

According to this hypothesis, the ground on which the cities were built must be deducted from the eight hundred acres mentioned in a preceding paragraph. A square of a thousand cubits, or five hundred yards, contains nearly fifty-two acres; which being subtracted from eight hundred, the remainder is about seven hundred and fifty acres, the extent of the suburbs allotted to the Levites "for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts."‡

The number of the sons of Levi, from a month old and upwards, according to the census taken on the plains of

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* Numbers xxxv. 3, 4, 5. † Menochius De Rep. Heb. lib. ii. c. 3.
‡ Numbers xxxv. 3.

Moab, was twenty-three thousand. But let us suppose, that, at the period when they entered upon the possession of their cities, some time after the division of the land among the other tribes, they had increased to twenty-four thousand, and it will follow, that the male inhabitants in each of the towns must have amounted to five hundred. The females, we may presume, did not fall short of the other sex; and if we make a small allowance for servants or domestic slaves, the hewers of wood and drawers of water attached to the ministrations of the tabernacle, the population of every city set apart for the Levites may be confidently rated at twelve hundred stationary inhabitants.

If we follow the common principle of calculation applicable to such cases, and fix on five as the number of individuals composing a household, the families in each Levitical city would amount to about two hundred and forty. Seven hundred and fifty acres divided among two hundred and forty families would yield fully three acres to each, or something more than half an acre to every person old and young,—a quantity of land amply sufficient for the uses of all the inhabitants, both for comfort and convenience; and more particularly, as these suburban fields were not applied to the production of corn, but employed solely for the keeping of cattle, and the raising, perhaps, of such culinary vegetables as could not well be carried from a greater distance.*

* The reader will be surprised at the following notice extracted from Bishop Horsley's Biblical Criticism, vol. i. p. 187. "Chapter xxxv. (Numbers) v. 4., from the wall of the city and outward, a thousand cubits round about," rather, says the bishop, "*from the centre of the city every way.*" This verse, he adds, describes the whole area of the city and the suburban space taken together.

It is obvious, that this note by the very learned prelate must have been intended for the fifth verse instead of the fourth; because, in the latter, the extent of land mentioned by the historian is only a thousand cubits, which

This computation is perfectly accurate, if we are right in supposing that the square of four thousand cubits comprehended the space on which the city stood. But if the measurement alluded to began at the wall instead of the centre of the city, and extended two thousand cubits outward from that boundary; and if the ground within the walls amounted to a thousand cubits every way, making, with the fields outside, five thousand cubits in all; it will follow, that the land granted to the Levites, at every one of their stations, could not be less than twelve hundred acres, or fully one half more than resulted from the former calculation. But I have said that the majority of commentators agree as to the propriety of the smaller number; among whom we may reckon the names of Grotius, Patrick, Menochius, and Lowman.

The opinion of Lewis, in regard to the lands set apart for the Levites, is equally singular and unauthorised. "Each of their cities, says he, had a suburb without the walls extending every way for the space of a thousand cubits. This was made use of to build barns, stables, out-houses, conveniences for hay and straw, and other accommodations, and, perhaps, for gardens of herbs and flowers. From the outside of this suburb there was a territory of two thousand cubits more, which was to be applied for pasture for their cattle. It was held unlawful to build houses, or plant vineyards, or sow corn in these fields. They were given them only to make their dwell-

could not by any means comprehend the "area of the city and the suburban space taken together." In the fifth verse, indeed, where the measurement is described as beginning at the *wall*, and stretching outward two thousand cubits into the fields, I am satisfied that the words should have been, as the bishop suggests, "*from the centre of the city every way*;" for here, there can be no doubt, the limits assigned by Jehovah embraced at once the city and the adjoining grounds set apart for the use of its inhabitants. The bishop's note, as it stands at present, is not only void of meaning, but it adds moreover to a difficulty which it was evidently his intention to remove.

ings more sweet, and that they might have the convenience of cattle about them for provisions and other uses. So that the entire circuit of ground round every city, which stood exactly in the midst, was in the whole three thousand cubits; a thousand for the suburbs, properly so called, and two thousand more for their pasture, called properly the fields of the suburbs.*

It is not easy to conjecture on what grounds the author of the Hebrew Antiquities has founded this extravagant position, so directly opposed to the statement of Scripture. Other writers have differed as to the point at which the measurement began, whether at the wall or the centre of the city; but no one, except Lewis, ever imagined that the suburban fields commenced at the distance of a thousand cubits from the city itself, and consequently extended three thousand cubits from the walls, and four thousand at least from the middle of the town.

Every reader of the Bible is aware that six of the Levitical cities were invested with the special privilege of affording refuge and protection to a certain class of criminals. The Jewish doctors maintain that this privilege, somewhat limited, belonged to all the forty-eight cities; for, being sacred, no act of revenge or mortal retaliation was permitted to take place within their gates. Into the six cities of refuge, properly so called, the manslayer could demand admittance whether the Levites were disposed to receive him or not; and, on the same ground, he was entitled to gratuitous lodging and maintenance until his cause was determined by competent judges. The Levites, they add, could exercise a discretionary power as to the reception of a homicide into any other of their cities, and even in respect

* Origines Hebrææ, vol. i. c. 13.

to the hire which they might demand for the house which he used during his temporary residence. But the institution of Moses, afterwards completed by Joshua, affords no countenance to these Rabbinical distinctions; and we have no reason whatever to believe that the benefit of asylum was attached to any Levitical cities besides Hebron, Shechem, Ramoth, Bezer, Kedesh, and Golan.*

As learning, and the several professions connected with the knowledge of letters, were confined almost exclusively to the tribe of Levi, the distribution of its members throughout the whole of the Hebrew commonwealth was attended with many advantages. Every Levitical city became a school as well as a seat of justice. There the language, the traditions, the history, and the laws of their nation, were the constant subjects of study; pursued with that zeal and earnestness which can only arise from the feeling of a sacred obligation, combined with the impulse of an ardent patriotism. Within their holy walls were deposited copies of their religious, moral, and civil institutions; which it was their duty not only to preserve but to multiply. They kept, besides, the genealogies of the tribes; in which they marked the lineage of every family which could trace its descent to the father of the faithful. Being well instructed in the law, and possessed of the annals of their people from the earliest days, they were well qualified to supply the courts with judges and scribes; men who were fitted not only to administer justice, but also to keep a record of all their decisions. It is perfectly clear, that in the reign of David and of the succeeding kings, the judges and other legal officers were selected from among the Levites; there being at the period just

* Joshua xx. 7, 8.; Numbers xxxv. 6. 15.; Deut. xix. 4. 10.

mentioned, not fewer than six thousand of that body who held such appointments.*

Michaelis represents the Levitical order among the Hebrews in the light of a literary noblesse; enjoying such a degree of wealth and consideration as to enable them to act as a counterpoise upon the secular aristocracy; and to prevent, on the other hand, the adoption of those hasty measures which were sometimes to be expected from the democratical nature of the general government.† They were not merely a spirituality, but literati of all the faculties; and by birth obliged to devote themselves to the sciences, for the cultivation of which they were so liberally rewarded. Like the Egyptian priesthood, they occupied the whole field of literature and science, and extended their inquiries to philosophy, theology, natural history, mathematics, jurisprudence, civil history, and even medicine. Perhaps, too, it was in imitation of the sages of the Nile, that the Hebrews made these pursuits hereditary in a consecrated tribe; whence flowed this obvious advantage, that the sons of the Levites, from their earliest infancy, were introduced to scientific researches, and favoured with an education suited to the occupations in which their lives were to be spent.‡ In short, the institution bears all the marks of that wisdom by which the Mosaical economy is so remarkably distinguished, when viewed as the basis of a constitution at once civil, religious, and political.

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* 1 Chron. xxiii. 4.; 2 Chron. xix. 8.; xxxiv. 13.

† Michaelis' Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, vol. i. art. 52.

‡ Michaelis, as above, and Jablonsky, Panth. Egyp. Prolegomena, 21, 41, 43.

The following works will be of great use to the young reader, who may be desirous to study, for his own satisfaction, the various subjects mentioned or alluded to in the foregoing chapter:—

Hermani Conringii Exercitationes de Politia, sive De Republica Hebræorum.
Petrus Cunæus De Repub. Hebræorum.
Bonavent. Cornel. Bertram De Repub. Heb.
Carolus Sigonius De Rep. Heb.
Lowman on the Civil Government of the Hebrews.
Abarbanelis Diss. de Statu et Jure Regio, et de Judicum et Regum Differentia.
Relandi Palestina.
——— Dissertationes Miscellaneæ.
Selden de Synedriis.
Spanheim, Charta Terræ Israelis.
Lewis, Hebrew Antiquities, or Orig. Heb.
Michaelis' Commentaries on the Law of Moses.
Fleury, Mœurs des Israelites.
Jenning's Jewish Antiquities.
Bocharti Geographia Sacra.
Calmet, Dissertation sur la Police des Hebreux.
Menochius, De Rep. Hebræorum.
Godwyn's Moses and Aaron.
Pareau, Antiquitas Hebraica.
Harmer's Observations.
Burder's Oriental Literature.
Paxton's Illustrations of Scripture.

Many of the above tracts are to be found in the valuable collection of Ugolini, entitled, "Thesaurus Antiquitatum Sacrarum," 34 vols. folio.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND PRACTICES OF THE ANCIENT HEBREWS.

UPON opening the book of Judges we meet with numerous and unquestionable proofs, that the tendency to idolatry which the congregation of Israel manifested during the whole of their journey through the wilderness, could no longer be restrained by the authority of their ordinary rulers. Amidst the corruption which ensued, and their frequent lapses into the grossest superstitions of the heathen, it may be difficult to ascertain with precision the theological opinions of the Hebrews after they took possession of the promised land; and still more difficult, perhaps, to collect from their practice any determinate views, in regard to the principles on which they offered up their obeisance and veneration to the beings whom, from time to time, they professed to worship.

Were we to be guided solely by the institutes of the Mosaical law, we should find it easy to determine the exact limits of the creed which bound the faith of every Israelite, as well as the practical observances to which his ritual called him, in the annual course of his fasts and festivals. But in the outline of religious belief and usage

which I am about to lay before the reader, we shall find ourselves compelled to have recourse to very scanty materials; to those casual notices which are occasionally engrafted upon the narrative of the historian, while he is pursuing some other object; or contained in the remonstrances of the prophet, who is commissioned by Jehovah to upbraid and reform his wandering people. Whatever information can be derived from the sources now mentioned, will be arranged under the three following heads:

First, The notions of the ancient Hebrews respecting the Supreme Being as the creator and governor of the world.

Secondly, The opinions and belief of the same people in reference to the immortality of the soul, and a future state of reward and punishment; and,

Thirdly, The history and object of their idolatrous practices prior to the Babylonish captivity.

1. Corrupted as the religion of the Israelites became in the time of the Judges, we can still discover, in the opinions which prevailed amongst them, traces of that purer faith which enlightened and elevated the minds of the more ancient patriarchs. Some of the devotional compositions of the same period, breathe a spirit of piety not less refined and ardent than that which blessed the better days of David and his son, and of those good kings who succeeded them on the throne of Judah. We find that the Hebrews recognized one great First Cause, as the source of all existence, and the director of all events. They cherished the belief of an unceasing Providence, whose power and omniscience extend to all created things; supporting the material world, and guiding all the operations of mind. To this Almighty Being they looked up for the reward of goodness and the punishment of vice; regarding him as privy to all thoughts, and the witness of every action. "The Lord killeth and maketh alive: he bringeth

down to the grave and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed."*

I know not whether it has been remarked, that, in the Hebrew writings, a distinction may be traced between the notions entertained of Jehovah, when worshipped as the God of the whole earth, and when viewed merely as the patron and protector of the children of Israel. The language applied to the Almighty in the former relation is truly sublime and appropriate; describing his attributes, his laws, and the rules of his government over man, in terms at once so suitable and so gratifying to the feeling of piety, that they are retained to the present day in the prayers, the hymns, and the doxologies of every church which admits the divine legation of Moses or of Christ.

But the descriptions which are applied to the same omnipotent and most gracious Being, when addressed as the tutelary God of the Hebrews, are very deficient in that dignity and elevation which belong to the greater part of the ancient Scriptures. The minute details of the Levitical law, for example, and the incessant interpositions of

* 1 Samuel ii. 6—10.

help and counsel, the stretched-out arm, the warning voice, and the angry denunciations which sometimes accompanied the exercise of the Mosaical government as well as the subsequent administration of the Judges, are very apt to withdraw the veneration of a hasty reader from those peculiar qualities of the Divine nature, which were invoked and adored by the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the God of Israel, a reader of this description will not readily recognize the eternal and all-powerful Sovereign of heaven and earth. On the contrary, he will persuade himself, that, in adopting such crude notions of Divine Providence, it would be impossible to avoid the rudest shocks to his faith, and the grossest insult to his piety; and that it would be better for the world to be without any form of religion at all, than to profess one so utterly inconsistent with our first and deepest impressions of the Almighty Creator.

The ground of objection in this case arises from the imbecility of the human mind; which, in its first attempts at reasoning, finds it very difficult to connect the minute and complicated events of human life with the exercise of that general and unlimited superintendence which respects the universe at large. In the infant state of society, it is not enough that a belief be held in Almighty God as the maker and governor of the world. The weakness and fears of man require also, that the Divine attributes shall be brought down and accommodated to the multitude of his dangers and necessities; and that his religious confidence shall be confirmed, not only in regard to the great facts of creation and providence, but also to the full extent of his own individual concerns, his hopes and his prospects, his labours by day and his safety during the night. For these reasons the God whom he worships

must not only be God of the heaven above and of the earth beneath, but he must also be, in a particular manner, the guardian of his nation, the benefactor of his tribe, the protector of his family, and even his personal adviser and friend. The early history of all nations is thus rendered the *personification of a particular providence*; a series of interpositions, to effect certain objects which would not otherwise have come to pass, and to prevent casualties which could not otherwise have been avoided.

The language of devotion, accordingly, will be found to assume its peculiar character from the different points at which it contemplates the attributes of the Divinity; and will be more or less sublime in proportion to the event which it celebrates, or the object to which it aspires. Nor is this distinction confined to the economy of the Hebrews. On the contrary, the same views of a special providence, which could hardly be reconciled to the general superintendence of one great Mind, have led to the same results in all the ancient forms of religion.

The primæval faith in all countries appears, indeed, to have recognized only one Divinity, the fountain of all existence spiritual and material, the author of all events, and the witness of all actions. Even in the mythologies of Greece and Rome, we find remaining the lofty ideas which were entertained of their gods, before their notions were contaminated by the intermixtures of the more vulgar polytheism.* But the Psalms,

* The reader may perhaps derive some amusement from the following extracts, relating to this interesting subject, chiefly compiled and abridged from the learned work of Cudworth, the Intellectual System of the Universe. The first is taken from the Commentary of Proclus.

Τουνεκα συν τω παντι Διος παλιν ἐντος ἐτυχθη
Αἰθερος ἐυρειης, ηδ' ὀυρανιου ἀγλαον ὑψος,
Ποντου τ' ἀτρυγετου, γαιης τ' ἐριγυδεος ἐυρη,

and more particularly the writings of the prophets, afford many examples of splendid imagery, wherein the Almighty is described in all the perfection of

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Ωκεανος τε μεγας, και νειατα ταρταρα γαιης
Και ποταμοι, και ποντος ἀπείρατος, αλλα τε παντα.

Translated thus by Aug. Steuchus Eugubinus :—

Fuerunt intra Jovem cum universo
Aetherea vastitas, et Cæli præclara sublimitas,
Immensique maris et telluris inclytæ latitudo,
Oceanusque ingens, depressaque tartara terræ,
Fluminaque et pontus sine fine, et cetera cuncta.

The next is a quotation, by the same author, from the metrical fragments which were known among the ancients as the Hymns of Orpheus :—

Ζευς πρῶτος γενετο, Ζευς ὑστατος ἀρχικεραυνος :
Ζευς κεφαλη, Ζευς μεσσα. Διος δ' ἐκ παντα τετυκται :
Ζευς ἀρσην γενετο, Ζευς ἀμβροτος ἐπλετο νυμφη :
Ζευς πυθμην γαιης τε και ουρανου ἀστεροεντος :
Ζευς πνοιη παντων, Ζευς ἀκαματου πυρος ὁρμη :
Ζευς ποντου ῥιζα, Ζευς ἡλιος ηδε σεληνη :
Ζευς βασιλευς, Ζευς αὐτος ἁπαντων ἀρχιγενεθλος ;
Ἑν κρατος, εἰς δαιμων γενεται, μεγας ἀρχος ἁπαντων.

Translated as follows by Vigerius :—

Princeps postremusque Jovis, qui fulmine candet :
Ille caput mediumque simul, cui cuncta creantur :
Ille solum ac cæli stellatos sustinet axes :
Mas natus Jovis est, natus Jovis integra virgo :
Spiritus est cunctis, validusque est Jupiter ignis :
Jupiter est pelagi radix, est lunaque solque :
Rex idem, rerumque parens, et originis auctor,
Unica vis, daemonque unus, qui cuncta gubernat.

The verses now to be transcribed from Sophocles are worthy of the finest conceptions of the Deity ever entertained either by Jew or Christian :—

Εις ταις ἀληθειαισιν, εἰς ἐστι θεος
Ος ουρανον τ' εστηξε, και γαιαν μακραν
Ποντου τε χαροπον οἰδμα κἀνεμων βιαν, κ. τ. λ.

Unus profecto, unus est tantum Deus,
Cæli solique machinam qui condidit,
Vastumque ponti cærulum, et vim spiritus, &c.

The ideas of Euripides were not less elevated than those of his predecessor in the splendid career of dramatical composition. The language in the following extract will remind the learned reader of the beautiful passage in one of the prophetical books, where the Almighty is said to be clothed with light as with a garment.

his attributes; as possessing universal empire; as being every where present; and as knowing the secrets of all

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Σε τον αὐτοφυη, τον ἐν αἰθερίῳ
Ρομβῳ, παντων φυσιν ἐμπλεξαντ'
Ὀν περι μεν φως, περι δ' ἐρεφναιω
Νυξ ἀιολοχρως, ἀκριτος τ' ἀστρων
Ὀχλος ἐνδελεχως ἀμφιχορευει.

Te, qui a te ipso es, quique aetherio
Rerum omne genus turbine versas,
Quem clara dies circumdat, quamque
Multicolor tegit nox, quemque astrorum
Vis non uno lumine fulgens
Circum assiduo volvitur orbe.

Of the Latin poets we find several writing as follows:—

Est profecto Deus, qui, quæ nos gerimus, auditque videtque.*

Quotidie ille scit quis hic quærat malum.
Iterum ille eam rem judicatam judicat.
Bonos in aliis tabulis excerptos habet.
Atque hoc scelesti illi in animum inducunt suum
Jovem se placare posse donis, hostiis;
Sed operam et sumptum perdunt, quia
Nihil ei acceptum est a perjuris supplicii.†

Jupiter qui genus colis alisque hominum, per quem vivimus
Vitale aevum, quem penes spes vitæque sunt hominum omnium
Da diem hunc sospitem, quaeso, rebus meis agundis.‡

Ille pater rectorque Deûm, cui dextra trisulcis
Ignibus armata est, qui nutu concutit orbem.§

O qui res hominumque Deûmque
Æternis regis imperiis, et fulmine terres.‖
O pater, O hominum Divumque æterna potestas.¶

Quid prius dicam solitis parentis
Laudibus, qui res hominum et Deorum,
Qui mare et terras, variisque mundum
Temperat horis?
Unde nil majus generatur ipso
Nec viget quidquam simile, aut secundum:**

* Plaut. Captiv. Act ii. Scen. 2. † Plaut. Rudens, in prolog. ‡ Idem Pæn. Act v. Scen. 4. § Ovid. Metamorph. lib. iii. ‖ Virgilius, Eneid. lib. i. ¶ Idem, Eneid. lib. x. ** Horat. lib. i. ode 12.

hearts.* It is He "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by the greatness of his might; for that he is strong in power. Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?"

These expressions are suitable to the dignity of the Divine attributes, so far as those attributes can be comprehended by the human intellect. But when Jehovah is represented as the tutelary God of Israel, the words and actions ascribed to him are of a much more familiar nature. The same prophet, from whose writings the above quotations are made, introduces the Almighty, the "Lord God of Hosts," as saying, "Go, get thee unto this treasurer, even unto Shebna, which is over the house, and say, What hast thou here, and whom hast thou here?"† Again he assures us, "Thus hath the Lord

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Qui terram inertem, qui mare temperat
Ventosum, et urbes, regnaque tristia,
Divosque, mortalesque turbas,
Imperio regit unus æquo.*

* Horat. lib. iii. ode 4.

* Isaiah xl. 12. 17. 22. 26. 28.; xliv. 24.; li. 6. 13.; lxvi. 1.
† Isaiah xxii. 15, 16.

spoken unto me, "Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice nor abase himself for the noise of them; so shall the Lord of Hosts come down to fight for Mount Zion, for the hill thereof. As birds flying, so will the Lord of Hosts defend Jerusalem."* To the Assyrian monarch, the relentless enemy of the Hebrews, the voice of Jehovah is thus lifted up: "I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears; therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest."†

It is perhaps too obvious to require remark, that, although the Hebrew writers, in the language which they applied to Almighty God, agreed with those of all other ancient nations in making a distinction between the supreme Deity as the Creator of the universe, and the particular exercise of his providence by which their own country was protected, yet the former did not, like the others, fall into the absurdities of polytheism, and multiply the number of their gods. Throughout the various pages of the several tracts which compose the Old Testament, there is to be found no difference of opinion as to the great truth, that the Maker of heaven and earth was the only God of Sion, and that besides him there was none else. Even the repeated idolatries of Israel seem never to have obliterated from their minds the fundamental article of their religion—the unity of God. Describing Him as the patron, the king, and even the

* Isaiah xxxi. 4, 5. † Isaiah xxxvii. 28, 29.

proprietor of their land; the giver of their laws, the director of their ceremonies, and the leader of their armies; as hating those whom they themselves had reason to dislike or to fear; and as punishing those at whose hands they had suffered injustice or oppression; they found it impossible sometimes not to attribute to Jehovah the feelings, the passions, and the policy of a man. But, when the proper occasions returned, the same authors failed not to call to mind that the great Being whom they worshipped was the sovereign of the universe; that he was clothed with eternal majesty, that his throne was established of old, and that he was from everlasting.* As for the gods of the heathens, they knew they were but idols, and that it was the Lord alone that made the heavens: that in his hand are all the corners of the earth, and the strength of the hills is his also; that the sea is his, and he made it, and that his hands prepared the dry land.† Animated with the spirit of devotion, they invited all the world to praise God as the common father and guardian of the whole creation. "O praise the Lord of heaven; praise him in the heights: Praise him all ye angels of his; praise him all his host. Praise him sun and moon; praise him all ye stars of light: praise him all ye heaven of heavens, and ye waters that are above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for he spake the word and they were made; he commanded and they were created. He hath made them fast for ever and ever; he hath given them a law which shall not be broken."‡

2. But the Hebrews not only believed in the existence and providence of one eternal God, who had chosen them to himself to be a peculiar people. Their religious faith,

* Psalm xciii. 3. † Psalm xcv. 4, 5. ‡ Psalm cxlviii. 1—6.

at the period now under consideration, was, moreover, distinguished by the views which it embraced relative to the Evil Principle, as opposed to the plans and motives of the Divine Benevolence.

The simple theology which they held prior to the Babylonish captivity, taught them that all events, whether prosperous or adverse, proceeded from the direct counsel and appointment of Jehovah; that good and evil sprang from the same source; that life and death, heat and cold, light and darkness, pain and enjoyment, were measured out by the same hand, through the instrumentality of different agents. Their creed admitted the important tenet, that, among the various orders of intellectual beings superior to man, there were some who delighted in obedience and happiness; while others, actuated by pride and malignity, found their most acceptable employment in directing the arrows of affliction, and in covering with darkness and fear the hearts of the human race. But the Hebrew divines never allowed themselves to doubt that these spirits, as well as the more beneficent ministers of his will, were under the constant and immediate control of the omnipotent God; and that they exceeded not, in the commissions with which they were intrusted, the bounds of his authority, nor extended their destructive services beyond the precise object which they were meant to realize. These evil angels were even understood to occupy a place in the presence of the Eternal, as did the other intelligencies who were employed only in messages of goodness; and both were indiscriminately called the sons of God and enrolled in the host of heaven.

The doctrine now stated receives full and various illustration from several passages of Scripture. When Ahab, for example, was about to adopt the foolish measures which were made to result in the punishment of his sins,

the sacred historian unfolds the counsels of the Almighty in the following terms:—"And Micaiah said, Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on the right hand and on the left. And the Lord said, Who will persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: Go forth, and do so."*

It is not our business at present to inquire into the matter and authority of Micaiah's vision; but we may be certain that the theological views which it embraces were in perfect agreement with the belief of the two kings whom he addressed, as well as with that of his countrymen at large. The good and evil spirits are represented by him as standing around the throne of God, the one class on the right hand and the other on the left, and as equally ready to execute his commands: and whatever allowance we may be disposed to make for oriental figure, and the adaptation of divine things to the conception of an illiterate people, we must at least admit, that the Persian doctrine of the Two Principles was not yet known to the inhabitants of Palestine.

There is not in any part of the Old Testament which was written before the captivity, the slightest allusion to Satan, as being the head of the malignant angels, or as having set up a kingdom for himself, in opposition to the gracious intentions of the Almighty in behalf of man. When, for

* 1 Kings xxii. 19—22.

instance, Abimelech, the son of Gideon, quarrels with the people of Shechem, the compiler of the book of Judges informs us, that "God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech." Again, when Saul, the unhappy king of Israel, laboured under the infirmities of a debilitated or melancholy mind, we are told, by the sacred annalist, that an "evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." "And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from the Lord troubleth thee: Let our lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man who is a cunning player on a harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well. And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."*

There is another occurrence mentioned in the historical books of the Old Testament, which at once corroborates the opinion here stated in regard to the doctrine of the

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* 1 Samuel xvi. 14, 15, 16. 23.

The effect produced by the singing of the celebrated Farinelli on Philip of Spain bears some analogy to the case of David and Saul.

"The deplorable state of despondency to which the king became reduced was such, that he refused to shave or appear in public. On the arrival of Farinelli, the queen resolved to try the effect of music, and she ordered a concert to be performed in an apartment adjoining the king's. Farinelli sang one of his best airs, which caught the attention of Philip, who was quite overcome. Before he had concluded, the king ordered Farinelli into his presence, and, bestowing the warmest encomiums on his talent, promised to grant whatever he might request. Farinelli seized the opportunity, and, in the most respectful terms, entreated that his majesty would allow his attendants to shave and dress him. The king consented; his disorder abated daily through the application of the same remedy, and a perfect cure was at length the result."—*Nathan's History of Music.*

ancient Hebrews, and also illustrates the change which took place, in their language at least, on the same subject, after their residence in the Babylonian territory. In the twenty-fourth chapter of the second book of Samuel, it is said, that "the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah." The king, it is well known, obeyed the impulse thus communicated to him, and gave orders to the captain of his host, to make an enrolment and census of the whole people; in consequence of which, the nation was visited with a sore pestilence, which swept away about seventy thousand men.*

In the twenty-first chapter of the first book of Chronicles, which, the reader is aware, was compiled after the return from Babylon, the same event is narrated as follows:—"And SATAN stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." The result, according to this edition of the history, was the same as that which has been already stated. "And God was displeased with this thing, therefore he smote Israel. So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel, and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men."†

The dispensation of Divine Providence here recorded is not unattended with considerable difficulty, under whatever light it may be presented to our consideration. The

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* 2 Samuel xxiv. 1, 2. 15.; 1 Chron. xxi. 1, 2. 14.

† Parkhurst, under the word שטן, observes, "that it is used in the sense of an *adversary* or *opposer*, Numbers xxii. 22.; 1 Samuel xxix. 4. et al. freq. And so I would understand it, 1 Chron. xxi. 1. of a *human adversary*. Compare 2 Samuel xxiv. 1. which, perhaps, may be best rendered, *And again the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel*, וישת את דוד, *and David was moved against them by (one's) saying*; or rather indefinitely, *And one moved David against them, saying, Go number Israel and Judah.*"

‡ This is a very weak attempt to remove an imaginary difficulty, and founded, too, upon a scruple relative to Divine Providence, which was not felt in the early age to which the event refers.

former statement is the more explicit, inasmuch as it ascribes the melancholy event in question to the direct and avowed purpose of the Almighty to punish his people for their transgressions. The author of the book of Chronicles, on the contrary, availing himself of the learning which he had acquired in the East, and influenced by a suitable tenderness for the harmony of the Divine attributes, refers the act of temptation to the malignity of the Evil Principle. "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number the people."

It deserves to be noticed, too, in this case, that the demon which enticed the king of Israel into the undutiful act which brought so heavy a requital upon the heads of his subjects, is no longer described as an "evil spirit from the Lord;" nor as having received any commission from the Almighty to infatuate the mind of the royal son of Jesse, and thereby to accomplish the objects of the divine indignation. Satan, on the contrary, appears before us, in the narrative, as an independent and voluntary agent. There is no mention made of any warrant or authority for the attack which he makes on the tranquillity of the peculiar people. He "stood up," says the record, against Israel, and provoked David to commit a heinous offence against the majesty of Heaven.

This view of the occurrence coincides exactly with the principles of the eastern philosophers; who, in order to account for the mixture of good and evil in the present world, adopted the narrow expedient of suggesting the operation of two powerful Principles, as affecting the course of events; happiness and perfection being the object of the one, while the production of misery and confusion employed all the efforts of the other. It would be inconsistent with the purpose which I am now pursuing, to give even an outline of the opinions just mentioned; for the

remarks which I have here ventured to lay before the reader are meant to be confined to the illustration of this single position, namely, that the Hebrews, while under the government of their Judges and early kings, were not acquainted with the doctrine of the Two Principles.

I have reserved till now the consideration of the remarkable details which are brought forward in the first chapter of the book of Job; because, on account of an inference drawn from them by a celebrated author, it will be necessary to inquire into their import with some degree of minuteness. Bishop Warburton, as every one knows, has fixed the era of the book now named to the period of the return from Babylon; resting his conclusion chiefly on the fact, that the existence of Satan is, in that work, distinctly stated and acknowledged. This deduction, I need scarcely add, proceeds on an assumption on the part of the writer that he has already proved, that, prior to the captivity, the history of moral evil, as connected with the principalities and powers of darkness, had not been revealed to such of the Hebrews as derived all their theology from the study of the Pentateuch.

"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is in-

creased in the land: But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord."*

Having quoted the verses which I have just transcribed, the learned author of the Divine Legation observes, that "the finding Satan in the scene is a strong proof that the work was composed in the age we have assigned to it. This evil Being was little known to the Jewish people till about this time. Their great lawgiver, where he so frequently enumerates and warns them of the snares and temptations which would draw them to transgress the law of God, never once mentioned this capital enemy of Heaven; yet this was an expedient which the wisest Pagan lawgivers thought of use to keep the populace in the ways of virtue. Nay, when the end of that sacred history which Moses composed obliged him to treat of Satan's grand machination against mankind, he entirely hides this wicked spirit under the animal which he made his instrument. On the return from the captivity, we find him better known; and things then are ascribed to him, as the immediate and proper author, which (while Divine Providence thought fit to keep back the knowledge of him) were before given in an improper sense to the first and ultimate Cause of all things."*

The bishop afterwards, having adored the wisdom of God in bringing truths gradually to light as the fulness of time drew nigh, remarks, that two of the principal tenets which were thus communicated to the Hebrew nation, were the HISTORY OF SATAN, and the DOCTRINE OF A

* Job i. 6—12. † Warburton's Divine Legation, book vi. section 2

FUTURE STATE. Now, says he, besides the use of these two truths to the general economy, they were of great advantage to the Jewish people at those very junctures when each was first made known to them. The *history of Satan*, it is evident, they were brought acquainted with during their *captivity*; and nothing could better secure them from the dangerous error of the Two Principles, which was part of the national religion of the country into which they were led captive.*

With the utmost deference for the genius and learning of this great writer, I cannot but think that his conclusion is very ill supported by the facts of the case upon which it is made to rest. Had the book of Job been composed after the captivity, it is almost certain that the evil spirit would not have been introduced into the presence of Jehovah, to receive authority to afflict the most perfect man upon earth: because, as the bishop himself observes, the Hebrews, on their return from the banks of the Euphrates, "ascribed things to Satan as the immediate and proper author, which were before given, in an improper sense, to the first and ultimate Cause of all things." The afflictions of the man of Uz are, by the writer of the book of Job, attributed to a direct and positive warrant on the part of Jehovah, granted to Satan as his instrument,—a statement which certainly accords much better with the simple theology which prevailed in the time of the Judges, than with the more guarded system of opinions which the Jews brought from the land of their servitude. The malignant emissary who was let loose against the Arabian patriarch, bears hardly any resemblance to the prince of devils, who, at a later period, is described

* Divine Legation, as above.

as opposing his kingdom to that of Heaven, and as waging an incessant war against the plans and servants of the Omnipotent. The Satan who vented his malice upon Job, accompanied the sons of God into the presence of the great Father of the universe, listened to questions, and showed himself ready to obey commands; and such, I repeat, is not the character of the master demon, whom the Jews, after the time of Ezra, were used to contemplate as the enemy of God and of man.

But the reasoning of the bishop may be supposed to draw some degree of cogency from the circumstance, that the *name* as well as the existence of the evil spirit were unknown to the Israelites until they went into Babylon; because, if such were the fact, it would be perfectly just to conclude, that any book in which the name of Satan is mentioned must have been written after the captivity. But no weight whatever can be attached to this distinction; for the word Satan, signifying an *adversary* or *accuser*, is found in the earliest writings of the Hebrew people. When, for example, the angel opposed Balaam on his impious journey, the divine messenger is said to have acted the part of Satan, מלאך יהוה בדרך לשטן. A similar expression occurs in the thirty-eighth Psalm, in the seventieth, and in the hundred and ninth: "Set thou a wicked man over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand." The mere use of the term, indeed, proves nothing; for in the more ancient compositions of the Jews it was employed as a simple appellative, and not as a proper name. The word Satan, therefore, in those writings, does not necessarily mean an evil spirit, but an accuser generally; and, for this reason, the expression just quoted from the hundred and ninth Psalm might have been translated, "Set thou a wicked man over him as his judge, and let an ac-

cuser be placed at his right hand, to load him with the imputation of atrocious guilt."

It is perfectly clear, on the slightest inspection of the sacred Scriptures, that the Hebrews were familiarly acquainted with the term which is applied, in the book of Job, to the emissary who went forth to persecute that holy man. The kindred language of Arabia, too, afforded a similar expression to denote the qualities of an accuser, whether among men, or among beings of a higher order. But it does not appear that the people of western Asia, the Hebrews and the Arabians, had acquired at the time when the life of Job was written, any knowledge of that "History of Satan," which the captive Israelites obtained during their detention in Assyria. The enemy of Job was not the same evil spirit which, after the captivity, awaked the fears and modified the theological views of the Hebrews. No writer who believed in the Two Principles, to the extent which the Jews did after their return to their native land, would have introduced the prince of the devils into the presence of Jehovah. The designs and attributes ascribed to Satan after that period, are utterly irreconcilable with the supposition that he should have been permitted to appear among the sons of God, and intrusted with a commission from the very mouth of the Eternal; whence it may be inferred, with much appearance of truth, that the book of Job was written long before the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

So far as any conclusion can be founded upon notices which are at once scanty and casual, we might perhaps be justified in stating that the opinions entertained by the Jews, in regard to supernatural agency, did not exclude from the service of the Almighty the ministrations even of those less perfect spirits whose office it was, ac-

cording to the notions of a simple and illiterate age, to convey to the bar of Heaven a record of human guilt, and to return thence with power and authority to punish it. The accusing demon is represented as just having finished a survey of the earth, in the discharge of his ungracious duty; and hence the question is put relative to the character of Job, whose life and circumstances the watchful emissary could not have failed to mark with due attention. The other angels, it may be presumed, were employed on a more pleasant service, as guardians to the good, and supporters to the weak; but it admits not of doubt, at the same time, that, agreeably to the system of the Arabian philosopher, both orders of spirits, the good and the bad, appeared occasionally to make a report, so to speak, of their several provinces; and, according to what they had seen and recorded, to implore from the great Judge the exercise of wrath or of mercy.*

This picture of the Divine administration, so different from that which must necessarily be drawn from the modified hypothesis of the Two Principles which was adopted by the Jews in the East, militates strongly against the argument of Warburton, respecting the era of the book of Job. "The finding Satan in the scene," so far

* Some traces of this simple theology may be discovered in various parts of the Old Testament, written at a period considerably later than the book of Job. "I saw by night, says the prophet Zechariah, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom, and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white. Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me, said unto me, I will show thee what these be. And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, *These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro upon the earth.*" In the vision, too, of the four chariots, "the angel answered and said, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. And he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth." And they said, "We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold all the earth sitteth still and is at rest." Zechariah i. 8, 9, 10, 11.; vi. 5. 7, 8.

from being a strong proof that the work was composed in the age which he has assigned to it, appears on all sound principles of reasoning to establish the very reverse; because, while in the earlier times of the Hebrew commonwealth, the ministry of evil spirits, as the direct agents and instruments of Providence, was distinctly recognized, we perceive, that, after the captivity, sin and pain were, as the bishop himself expresses it, ascribed to the devil "as the immediate and proper author."*

* It is by no means the main object of the above observations to determine the era at which the book of Job was written. The opinion of learned men, indeed, is generally opposed to the notion which Warburton adopted from former writers, who ascribed the composition of that interesting drama to certain Jews who resided in the territory of Babylon. "The oldest book we have remaining," says Bishop Sherlock, "is the book of Job: there is all the appearance that can arise from internal characters, that it was written before any of the books of Moses. I know that some have endeavoured to bring down this ancient writer to the times of the Babylonish captivity, and suppose the book to have been written for the consolation of the captives in their distress. But if you suppose it written for the sake of the Jews, is it not strange that there should not be in a discourse of such a kind, one single word of the law of Moses; nor so much as one distant allusion to any rite or ceremony of the law, or any one piece of history later than Moses, nor to any of the forms of idolatry for which the Jews suffered at the time of their captivity? The conjecture would be as ingenious and well-founded, should any critic suppose that the Iliads of Homer were written to celebrate the military expeditions of the Goths and Vandals. The learned Grotius supposes this book to be written for the consolation of the descendants of Esau, carried away in the Babylonish captivity. He saw plainly, I suppose, that the book could by no means answer to the case of the Jews, as well for the reasons already mentioned, as for this likewise, That the Jews undoubtedly suffered for their iniquity; and the example of Job is the example of an innocent man suffering for no demerit of his own. Apply this to the Jews in their captivity, and the book contradicts all the prophets before and at the time of the captivity, and is calculated to harden the Jews in their sufferings, and to reproach the providence of God."—*Sherlock's Dissertations*, ii. p. 235.

In addition to the remarks made in the text, relative to the complete absence of all traces of the doctrine of the Two Principles in the book of Job, I may now mention, as a proof of the greater antiquity of that composition, that the only species of idolatry to which there is any allusion in it, is the worship of the heavenly host, usually denominated Sabaism. "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand; this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge, for I should have denied the God that is above. Job xxxi. 26, 27, 28.

In the book of Isaiah, there is a beautiful and very striking declaration on the part of the Almighty, which is calculated to remove all doubt, did any exist, in regard to the total absence among the Hebrews, when that prophet wrote, of the doctrine of the Two Principles, or even of the slightest approach to its ensnaring tenets. I FORM THE LIGHT AND CREATE DARKNESS: I MAKE PEACE AND CREATE EVIL: I THE LORD DO ALL THESE THINGS.*

Every reader of Persian history knows well that the Evil Principle was indicated by darkness as opposed to light, and by matter as opposed to mind; that he was regarded as the source of all disorder and pain, whether physical or moral; and was believed, in short, to maintain a constant warfare against that almighty and benign Spirit from whose will the better parts of creation took their rise. The former was dreaded as the malignant Being who formed the darkness and created evil; who introduced into this world suffering and death; and whose wicked counsels, moreover, were to perpetuate, till the end of time, a divided sovereignty among the works of Almighty God.

But the Hebrew doctrines, more faithful to the attributes of the Eternal, ascribed to his immediate will and operation, all the good and all the evil which diversify the lot of man upon earth: "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil also: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away."† "Shall there be evil in a city, says the prophet, and the Lord hath not done it?"‡ "With him is strength and wisdom: the *deceived and the deceiver are his.* He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.

* Isaiah xlv. 7. † Job i. 21.; ii. 10. ‡ Amos iii. 6.

He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged. He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way. They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man."*

Every event is attributed by this ancient theology to the direct interposition of Almighty God, or, at least, to the immediate use of such instruments as he is pleased to employ. When he threatens his people with judgments, he conceals not that the greatest of natural evils proceed from the words of his mouth. "If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts: Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land, so that I cut off man and beast from it: Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast; though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness."† Nay, the avowal of Divine agency in producing evil for the punishment of wicked men, is carried to a still greater extent. "Thus saith the Lord God, Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations. For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning me; I

* Job xii. 16, 17. 20. 24, 25. † Ezekiel xiv. 15. 17. 19, 20.

the Lord will answer him by myself. *And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing*, I THE LORD HAVE DECEIVED THAT PROPHET; and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and I will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel."

The opinions of the Jews on this important subject, after their return from Babylon, will be collected with considerable success from those interesting books, which, though not admitted into the canon of Scripture, are allowed on all hands to convey an accurate outline of the theological and philosophical sentiments which the descendants of Jacob brought back with them into the land of Canaan. Bishop Warburton maintains, that the knowledge which, during the captivity, they acquired of the "history of Satan," was meant by Divine Providence to counteract in their minds the incorrect views of the Eternal Sovereignty, which they must have found it extremely difficult to avoid, while living in the midst of a people whose national religion was founded upon the doctrine of the Two Principles. To what extent this beneficial effect was likely to be produced, by the addition which was then made to their historical acquaintance with the origin and progress of moral evil among the human race, I willingly leave to others to determine. But that their notions in regard to this obscure inquiry underwent a considerable change, during the seventy years that they spent in the land of their conquerors, admits not of any reasonable doubt.

In the Wisdom of Solomon, for example, we are informed, that "THROUGH ENVY OF THE DEVIL CAME DEATH INTO THE WORLD,"—a declaration which contains the sum and substance of the oriental doctrine in respect to the origin of evil. "God," says the same writer, "made not death; neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of

the living. For he created all things that they might have their being; and the generations of the world were healthful; and there is no poison of destruction in them; nor the kingdom of death upon the earth. God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world; and they that do hold of his side do find it."*

At a later period, the doctrines of the Jewish teachers on this head became still more systematic and distinct; and, consequently, the people at large began to use a species of language in reference to the kingdom and power of Satan, which was altogether unknown to their remoter ancestors. As the epoch of redemption drew near, a deeper knowledge and clearer views were vouchsafed to the religious world, relative to the character of that Evil Principle who had withdrawn the allegiance of man from his Maker; and had thus brought down upon the successive generations of human beings, the innumerable pains and fears which so often render the present life miserable, and cover the future with despair. The readers of the Pentateuch, and the readers of that portion of Holy Scripture which was written after the captivity, could not fail to have very different ideas of the invisible powers of darkness. In the former, as well as in the historical books which immediately succeed it, the punishments inflicted upon mankind for their sins are always represented as proceeding directly from the hand of God; whereas in the latter, the sufferings entailed upon humanity, are described in general as visitations from the Evil One. Almost every disease was the work of a demon. St Luke speaks of a

* Wisdom of Solomon i. 13, 14.; ii. 23, 24.

woman who had a spirit of infirmity, and whom Satan had bound eighteen years;* and the other evangelists have recorded a great variety of cases where the same malignant spirit had exerted his power to deprive unhappy patients of health, reason, and even the use of their bodily organs.†

The facts now stated seem also to afford ample proof that the doctrine under consideration had not its origin in Egypt, but rather in the countries which stretch eastward from the Euphrates. Amid all the superstitions which darken the history of the inhabitants of the Nile, we can perceive no remains of the singular opinion which took so firm a hold of eastern philosophy, in respect to the origin and continuance of evil in this portion of the Divine government. It had at least no existence among them while the Israelites were resident in their country; for had any such doctrine been taught by the priests of Memphis or Heliopolis, there can be no doubt that the sons of Jacob would have engrafted some form of it upon their own religious creed. Moses, who was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, appears not to have imbibed any notions in relation to the tenet of the Two Principles; and the Hebrews, who contrived to perpetuate, in their idolatrous usages, a memorial of almost every rite which

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* Luke xiii. 11. 16.

† Il est remarquable que dans les livres de l'Ancien Testament ecrits en Hebreu, et avant la captivité de Babylone, nous ne lisons le nom d'aucun mauvais esprit; mais seulement des noms generaux qui designent le premier des demons, ou les demons ses suppôts. On y lit *Satan*: mais ce terme est un nom generique, qui signifie accusateur ou calomniateur, et qui a assez de rapport au Grec *diabolos*, qui signifie le meme chose. On voit dans l'Evangile qu' on attribuoit au demon la plupart des incommodités et des maladies. Nous y voyons un esprit muët, ou un demon qui rendoit l'homme muët.

L'Ecriture nous represente les demons comme toujours occupés a nous tromper, a nous tenter, a nous nuire, a nous tormenter. Les morts prematurées et extraordinaires, les maladies du corps, sur tout celles qui sont les plus inconnues et les plus opiniâtres, sont attribuées aux demons.—*Calmet, Dict.* DEMONS.

was practised by the subjects of Pharaoh, were never degraded by the impious belief that a rival to the Almighty had started up from among his own creatures.

The learned Hyde was, therefore, greatly in the wrong when he maintained that Zoroaster and his followers acquired their first notions of this doctrine from the book of Genesis, and from the Jews during the Babylonish captivity; for, till after that period, we cannot discover the slightest evidence in the writings or practices of the Hebrew nation, that they extended their faith to the belief of Ormuzd and Aherman.* Plutarch, who, of all the Greeks, has written at the greatest length on this subject, attributes, without hesitation, to the Magi, the very ancient theological hypothesis which has suggested the above remarks. Most of the sages of other times, says he, were of opinion that there are two gods, whose pursuits and inclinations are quite different; the one being the author of all good, the other of all evil. Him that does good they call God; while to the other they give the name of Demon. Thus they were called by Zoroaster, who lived, as they say, five hundred years before the Trojan war. He denominated the benevolent spirit, Oromazes, and the malignant one, Areimanios. He said, moreover, that the former had a greater resemblance to *light* than to any thing else that falls under the senses; and that the latter could only be likened to *darkness* and ignorance. He added, that between these two beings a place was occupied by one called Mithres; on which account

* Zoroastres, eorum (Persarum) propheta et legislator, ejusque asseclæ Persarum Magi, ex Geneseos historia, et ex quotidiana cum captivis Judæis in Persia conversatione, didicerunt sua Principia *Lucis et Tenebrarum*, quibus intelligitur Deus et Diabolus.—*Hyde Hist. Rel. Vet. Persarum*, cap. 22, p. 292.

the Persians still give to him the name of Mediator or the intermediate divinity.

To the good spirit it was necessary, in order to obtain favour and blessings, to perform sacrifices expressive of gratitude and thanksgiving; to the other, it was not less incumbent upon the worshipper to make suitable offerings, for the purpose of averting evil. Herbam enim quandam, vocatam Ομωμι, concidendo, et in mortario tundendo, invocant Αδην, *Ditem*, et Σκοτον, Tenebras: cum admixto lupi jugulati sanguine, efferunt et abjiciunt in locum ἀηλιον, quo solis radii non pertingunt: nam et de Plantis quasdam judicant boni Dei esse, et quasdam mali: et Animalium quædam, ut canes, aves, et echinus terrestris, Bono; aquatica Malo adjudicant, itaque et beatum illum predicant qui plurima interfecerit. Enimvero illi quoque multa de iis fabulosa narrant, cujus generis est quod referam. Oromazen natum aiunt ex Luce purissima, Arimanium e Caligine; eosque bellum inter se gerere. Oromazen fecisse sex Deos; primum Benevolentiæ, secundum Veritatis, tertium Æquitatis, reliquos Sapientiæ, Divitiarum, et Voluptatis quæ honesta consequitur: Arimanium totidem numero his adversos effecisse. Deinde Oromazen sese triplicâsse, et a sole tanto se intervallo removisse quanto sol e terra abest; ac Cœlum stellis decorasse, unamque ante alias tanquam custodem et speculatorem constituisse, Sirium. Alios porro deos viginti quatuor condidisse, et in Ovo possuisse; ac totidem numero factos ab Arimanio Ovum illud perforasse, hinc mala bonis esse permixta. Appetere porro fatale tempus, quo necesse sit peste et fame ab his adducta, Arimanium omnino perdi et aboleri: Terrâque æquabili et plana factâ, unam vitam unamque civitatem Beatorum hominum universorum, unaque lingua utentium, fore. Theopompus ait, de sententia Magorum, vicibus ter mille annorum alterum Deorum

superare, alterum succumbere; et per alia tria annorum millia bella inter se gerere; pugnare, et alterum alterius opera demoliri: tandem Αδην, *Plutonem*, deficere, et tunc homines fore beatos, neque umbram edentes: deum porro, qui ista machinetur, quiescere ad aliquod tempus; non quod longum sit Deo, sed rectum et mediocre tanquam hominis dormientis.*

It can do no honour to the Jewish religion to suppose, that such notions as these now explained, could have originated in its divine institutions. Several of the ancient Christian writers have manifested an indiscreet zeal to find, even in the grossest superstitions of the heathen, a resemblance to the sacred rites of our inspired faith. Justin Martyr, for example, pleases himself with the fancy that, in celebrating the mysteries of the Persian god Mithras, the pagans imitated the administration of the Lord's supper. After reciting the words of institution, as recorded by the evangelists, *τουτ' ἐστι το σωμα μου: τουτ' ἐστι το αἱμα μου*, he adds, *ὁπερ και ἐν τοῖς του Μιθρα μυστηριοις παριδωκαν γινεσθαι μιμησαμενοι οἱ πονηροι δαιμονες: ὁτι γαρ ἀρτος και ποτηριον ὑδατος τιθεται ἐν ταις του μυουμενου τελεταις μετ' ἐπιλογων τινων.*†

It is upon the same mistaken ground that Dr Hyde proceeds, when he claims for the faith of the Magians, in regard to paradise, the same authority which is due to

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* Ὁυ μην κακεινοι πολλα μυθωδη περι των θεων λεγουσιν. Ὁια και ταυτα ἐστι. Ὁ μεν Ὡρομαζης, ἐκ του καθαρωτατου φωτος, ὁ δε Αρειμανιος ἐκ ζοφου γεγονως πολεμουσιν ἀλληλοις. Και ὁ μεν ἑξ θεους ἐποιησε, τον μεν πρωτον, ἐυνοιας, τον δε δευτερον, ἀληθειας, τον δε τριτον, ἐυνομιας. Των δε λοιπων, τον μεν σοφιας, τον δε πλουτου, τον δε των ἐπι τοις καλοις ἡδεων δημιουργον. Ὁ δε τουτοις ὡσπερ ἀντιτεχνους ἰσους τον ἀριθμον. Ειθε ὁ μεν Ὡρομαζης τρις ἑαυταυξησας ἀπεστησε του ἡλιου τοσαυτον ὁσον ὁ ἡλιος της γης ἀφεστηκε, και τον ὀυρανον ἀστροις ἐκοσμησε.—*Plutarchus De Isidc et Osiride*, cap. xlvii. *Ed. Wyttenbuch, Oxonii*, 1796.

† Justini Apologia Prima, p. 97.

that of the ancient Hebrews.* On some other points, he likewise attempts to identify the belief of Christians with the dreams of the Persian Dualists, on principles which can hardly meet the approbation of any delicate mind. Having quoted from native authors a long account of the wars carried on between the Two Principles, together with the various successes and devices of either Power, he adds: Such is the hypothesis of those writers, collected partly from the Biblical history, and partly from the tradition of the earliest times. And as to the above-mentioned struggle between God and the devil, we ought not, says he, hastily to blame those who have given us the narrative; because we ourselves profess to believe the very same things. *And there was a war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.*† These extracts, he concludes, from Zoroaster and the Magians, were written long before the Apocalypse, in which book we have the tradition continued to our times, which was received from the oldest of the patriarchs; hence we infer, that this opinion has always been received among the orthodox of the East, and that such has been their manner of speaking concerning these things.

The Christian reader cannot be gratified with such conclusions in regard to his sacred books. He will not be readily induced to believe that the extravagant visions of

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* Et cum talia statuerunt *Magi Deicolæ*, quis non credat tam hos, quam eis contemporaneos Judæos, a primis Patriarchis talem suam paradisi notionem habuisse, quamvis nihil dicatur in *Veteri Testamento.—Hist. Rel. Vet. Pers.* cap. 22.

† Revelation xii. 7, 8, 9.

Persian writers ought to be placed on the same footing with the truths of inspiration.

A similar folly has been committed with respect to the writings of the Greek philosophers, and especially of Plato, the most celebrated of their number. They have been accused of borrowing, without acknowledgment, from the works of Moses and the prophets, nearly all the lofty views and valuable precepts which are to be found in their pages. Moses, says Justin Martyr, is more ancient than all the writers of Greece: and, accordingly, all that the poets and philosophers have taught concerning the immortality of the soul, a future state of rewards and punishments, and the contemplation of heavenly things, have been derived more or less directly from the books of the prophets. Influenced by the same views, he classes together the works of Hystaspes, of the sibyl, and of the prophets; stating, that, by the labour and instigation of the bad demons, the punishment of death had been denounced against all who should be convicted of reading them. This, he adds, was done with the intention of deterring men from the perusal of such valuable compositions, in order that they might continue in ignorance of the good things which were there made known, and be more easily retained in the condition of slaves.*

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* Πρεσβυτερος γαρ Μωσης και παντων των εν Ἑλλησι συγγραφεων. Και παντα ὁσα περι ἀθανασιας ψυχης, ἡ τιμωριων των μετα θανατον, ἡ θεωριας ὁυρανιων, ἡ των ὁμοιων δογματων, κατ' φιλοσοφοι και ποιηται ἐφασαν, παρα των προφητων τας ἀφορμας λαβοντες και νοησαι δεδυνηνται και ἐξηγησαντο—Κατ' ἐνεργειαν δε των φαυλων δαιμονων, θανατος ὡρισθη κατα των τας Ὑστασπου, ἡ Σιβυλλης, ἡ των προφητων βιβλους ἀναγινωσκοντων, ἱνα ὡς δια του φοβου ἀποστρεψωσιν ἐντυγχανοντας τους ἀνθρωπους των καλων γνωσιν λαβειν, ἀυτους δε δουλευοντας κατεχωσιν.—*Just. Apol. Prima*, p. 67.

Of the same character is the following observation by Dr Hyde:—Talia etiam sunt duo Boni et Mali Principia apud *Peruvianos*; unde constat eos non fuisse ita prorsus a reliquo humano genere disjunctos, quin habuerint notitiam Historiæ creationis.

It is indeed a remarkable fact, that the doctrine of the Two Principles has been found among a people so long and entirely separated from the in-

I have endeavoured to prove that the doctrines of Dualism did not originate among the Hebrews, and also that, in the earlier periods of their history, they were unknown even to the Egyptians. It is to the eastern parts of Asia that we must look for the rudiments of that impious faith, which some philosophizing Jews attempted to mix with the simple truths of the Mosaical law; and which, in the first age of Christianity, were actually made the basis of one of the most revolting heresies that disturbed the peace of the primitive believers.* The antiquity of this hypothesis among the oriental philosophers is confirmed more and more by the increasing researches of European learning on both sides of the Indus.

"The patriarchs who dwelt in Chaldea," says Mr Maurice, "held FIRE in profound though not in idolatrous veneration; because, like their ancient neighbours of Persia and India, they thought it the noblest image and symbol of God in nature. Their extensive speculations in physics also increased that veneration; they considered it as an immediate emanation from God; they knew that it was the grand agent under the Deity in all the operations of nature. When sensible objects and secondary causes became, in the philosophy of succeeding ages, the more immediate object of minute investigation, the GREAT FIRST CAUSE OF ALL became an object more distantly remote from thought, was by degrees neglected, and the worship of Himself, as was too usual in the ancient world,

habitants of the old world. But instead of supposing that they were acquainted with the book of Genesis, which, by the way, communicates nothing directly and specifically on the subject, would it not be more reasonable to conclude, that the natives of America had been seduced into this error by the same difficulties and narrow views which misled the wise men of the East?

* The allusion here is to the Manichæan hypothesis; for an account of which the reader is referred to Mosheim's Eccl. History, vol. i. chap. 5.

was transferred to the symbol that represented him. After this all-pervading fire, their philosophy led the Chaldeans to place next in order that finer, subtle, and luminous fluid which they denominated the Supramundane Light, in which the heavenly bodies floated. This fluid they esteemed far less gross than the fluid which surrounds the globe, and this in India is called the Akass.

"By the *Akass* the Indians mean a kind of celestial element, pure, impalpable, unresisting, and resembling the air rarified into æther of the Stoic philosophers. Next to the supramundane light ranks the Empyræum; and nearest the earth a grosser æther, which is still denominated a kind of fire, πυρ ζωογονον, a life-generating fire, of which are formed the orbs of the sun and planets. Of the first ætherial light or fire which emanates from God himself, are composed the eternal Monad, and all the various orders of subordinate deities, ζωναιοι και αζωναι, that is, those who exert their influence and operations about the zones of heaven, created intelligent angels, good dæmons, and the souls of men. All these orders, the orders of light and immateriality, are under the government and direction of Ormuzd, the god of light and benevolence. But as there are orders of luminous and immaterial beings, so there are those also of darkness and immateriality. These consist of evil demons, and they are six in number. The first of these inhabit the regions more immediately sublunary; the second, the regions nearer the earth, dark, stormy, and full of vapours; the third are those malignant and unclean spirits that range the earth; the fourth inhabit the depths of the waters, and agitate with storms and whirlwinds the gloomy abyss of the ocean; the fifth are subterraneous, and delight to dwell in caverns and charnel vaults; these excite earthquakes, and all other internal convulsions in the bowels of the harassed globe;

the sixth, lucifugous, and hardly sensible of animation or capable of motion, roam through the profundities of darkness, and hold their reign as it were in the very centre and bosom of chaos; all these obey Ahriman as their supreme lord and captain.

"*The whole of this hypothesis may be found in India.* There, on the one hand, we see the benevolent spirits, the offspring of light, the Soors, possibly so called from Surya the sun, headed by Brahma or Veeshnu, issuing from the empyræum, or inferior heaven of Eëndra, and animated by affection or melted with pity, watching over, preserving, and protecting the human race: on the other hand, we observe the dreadful army of the Assoors, those dark and perturbed spirits who tenant the dreary regions of the North Pole, drawn up in terrible array under the Mahasoor, or Lucifer of India, meditating the molestation and destruction of the human race, and showering down upon them desolation and plagues."*

That the theological opinions of the Magi originated in a country nearer the rising sun than any of the provinces of Persia, is farther confirmed by the following statement of Ammianus Marcellinus. Having described, agreeably to the sentiments of Plato, the worship of those sages, he remarks, that, at a very remote period, a considerable addition was made to their system by Zoroaster the Bactrian, who had acquired his information from the mysteries of the Chaldeans. Afterwards, says he, when Hystaspes, the very intelligent father of Darius, was engaged in penetrating the farthest and most sequestered parts of Upper India, he arrived at a remarkable solitude in the midst of a forest, where an assembly of Brahmans, the

* Maurice, Indian Antiquities, vol. iv. p. 267.

finest geniuses of the East, enjoyed the blessings of silence and tranquillity. Under their tuition he learned the principles of astronomy, as applied to the motion of the earth and stars, together with an outline of the pure rites which ought to be employed in the worship of the gods; and all the knowledge, that he obtained in this school of Brahminical science, he communicated to the priests of his own country, who have been careful to perpetuate it in their several families, even till the present day.*

There can be no doubt that it was among the philosophers of Eastern Asia that the hypothesis which has so long detained the reader was moulded into one of the leading principles of a theological system. There it was that the hostile spirit was first clothed with those qualities of malignity and guile, which fitted him for an object of worship as well as of terror to the ignorant pagans of India and Persia. The more western nations mean time, who likewise recognized the existence of various orders of intelligences, regarded the whole spiritual creation as the willing and obedient servants of the Most High. Among the ancient Greeks, says Hyde, there was no name for the devil, nor any conception formed of such a being as impure and wicked. Pluto, who was appointed to preside over the regions of punishment, was held in honour and esteem; and never regarded as having interests or views in the smallest degree opposed to those which belonged to

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* Cui scientiæ, seculis priscis, multa ex Chaldæorum arcanis, Bactrianus addidit Zoroastres. Deinde Hystaspes, prudentissimus Darii pater, qui cum superioris Indiæ secreta fidentius penetraret, ad nemorosam quandam venerat solitudinem, cujus tranquillis silentiis præcelsa Bracmanorum ingenia potiuntur; eorumque monitu, rationes mundani motus et siderum, purosque sacrorum ritus, quantum colligere potuit, eruditus, ex his quæ didicit, aliqua sensibus Magorum infudit; quæ illi, cum disciplinis præsentiendi futura, per suam quisque progeniem, posteris ætatibus tradunt.—*Amm. Marcel.* lib. xxiii.

the more gracious order of deities. Apud veteres Græcos nullum extat Diaboli nomen, nec de eo aliqua mala notio ut spurci aut nequam: Sed Pluto habitus est Inferorum Gubernator satis honorabilis, qui sicut lictor præest pœnis irrogandis. Δαιμων, *Genius* erat indifferens, sive Ευδαιμων, sive Κακοδαιμων.*

But although those Hebrews, whose faith was formed upon the writings of Moses, had no knowledge of the evil spirit, the existence and history of whom, according to Warburton, was revealed to their descendants during their thraldom at Babylon, we are not to conclude, that, in their ancient sacred writings, no intimation is afforded respecting the origin of evil in this world, as connected with the malice and deceit of the great enemy of human happiness.

It must, indeed, be admitted, that, as far as the facts alluded to are concerned, the Jews read the books of their oldest prophet with a veil upon their understandings; that they confined their attention to the literal record, without comprehending its spiritual import and signification; and that none of their institutions, whether ritual or moral, have any direct and specific reference to the intrigues of diabolical malignity which led to the fall of man. It is, therefore, only through the medium of Christianity, that we can perceive the true meaning of the mystical narrative, in which is conveyed to us the history of human disobedience. It is, as Bochart remarks, the peculiar office of the New Testament to reveal the divine truths which the Old Testament had vailed. The Jews must receive the Gospel before they shall ever fully understand the writings of Moses and the prophets. It

* Hyde, Hist. Rel. Vet. Per.

is only from the foot of the cross that they shall be enabled to comprehend the mysterious facts which are involved in the character and agency of the serpent; in the doom which was pronounced upon him; and in the promise of victory and revenge shadowed forth to the world under the figure of the woman and her progeny. That it hath pleased Divine Providence to conceal these doctrines and hopes so long from the chosen people, to whom in fact they were originally revealed, is one of those determinations of Infinite Wisdom which neither research nor learning will ever be able to fathom.*

3. There remains only one topic to be considered under this section, relative to the belief of the ancient Hebrews; that, namely, which respects the doctrine of the Trinity.

I need scarcely remark that, in all investigations of this nature, we ought to confine our inquiries to the writings and religious usages of the Israelites themselves, as we find these recorded in the canonical books of Scripture; placing ourselves as nearly as possible on the very

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* To such readers as are disposed to enjoy the disquisitions of deep learning on a very mysterious subject, I beg leave to recommend the serious perusal of a treatise by Samuel Bochart, *De Serpente Tentatore*. His inquiries extend to the following points:—1. Quo fundamento præ aliis terræ animalibus (serpens) dicatur astutus; quandoquidem varia extant alia, vulpes, canis, simia, elephas, &c. quæ eo longe callidiora videantur. 2. Qua facultate locutus sit, an ex seipso an ex Diabolo. 3. Eo dato, quod Diabolus per eum sit locutus, cur Moses illius tantum meminerit qui fuerit duntaxat Diaboli organum, Diaboli vero ipsius, eo in negotio præcipue operantis, nullum prorsus injiciat mentionem. 4. Qua de causa Satanas animal istud potius quam aliud quodlibet ad hominem a Deo abducendum præoptârit. 5. Quodnam anguis genus ad hanc seductionem adhibuerit. 6. Quî factum, ut mulier animal hujuscemodi neque fuerit cum fremitu quadam aversata est neque aufugerit; neque etiam stupore quodam fuerit perculsa, dum illum humanas voces audiret edentem. 7. Quare, cum Tentatio ab uno Diabolo profecta sit, Serpens divinam incurrerit maledictionem. 8. Quomodo hoc maledictione fuerit percussus; *supra ventrem serpes, comedesque pulverem;* quandoquidem hæc ejus nativam sequantur conditionem, non videntur profecto isthæc ipsi ut maledictum aliquod potuisse accedere.—*Bocharti Opera*, vol. i. p. 836.

ground which they occupied at the particular period of which the history is to be examined. Many authors, neglecting this indispensable rule, have had no difficulty to discover, in the creed of the Hebrews, all the articles of the Christian faith; and, proceeding on the footing which they have thus assumed, they interpret the writings of the earliest ages, upon principles which were entirely unknown both to those who composed those writings, and to those who were to read them. Others, again, have sought a basis for the profoundest doctrines of our holy religion in the uncertain deductions of verbal criticism; drawing from the grammatical properties of a language which is no longer clearly understood, a system of belief which ought to have for its authority the plainest declarations of inspired truth. To know what tenets the Hebrews held at any particular epoch, we should have direct recourse to the sacred record of their faith and worship, which has been preserved for our learning: and it is only when we are desirous to find out the spiritual import of the ordinances which they were enjoined to observe, or of the language which they were taught to employ, that we should call in to our aid the brighter light of our own more perfect dispensation. If we proceed on any other principle, we may, indeed, attain to a suitable knowledge of the ultimate object and purport of the ancient Scriptures; but we shall not read them, as the Hebrews read them in the days of Moses and of the Judges; nor be able to limit the revelation of God's will to the precise boundaries to which, at that remote period, He was pleased to restrict the views and the faith of his chosen people.

Taking these maxims for our guide in the investigation upon which we are about to enter, we shall probably arrive at the following conclusion; namely, that, although the Hebrews entertained the belief of a plurality of hypo-

stases in the Godhead, they had not gained, in respect to the doctrine of a Trinity in unity, those distinct conceptions which are supplied by the Gospel, and illustrated by the history of redemption. But the reader must be aware, that this inference applies only to the creed of the Hebrews considered in a national capacity; for that the true doctrine relative to the Divine nature was known to the patriarchs, as well as to the inspired teachers under the law, cannot, it is presumed, admit of any rational doubt. He who saw the Redeemer's day afar off and was glad, could not, we may be satisfied, have been left in ignorance as to the character of the adorable personage upon whose mission and exertions such exalted hopes were placed. Nor is it probable that the inspired father of the Israelitish tribes, who predicted the blessings which were to be poured upon the world, under the sceptre of Shiloh, the Prince of peace, was denied all knowledge of the relation in which that Deliverer stood to the great Sovereign of the universe.

But if we confine our attention to the institutes of the Jewish religion, as established by Moses, and to the devotional exercises of the people, as directed by his successors, we shall find reason to question the accuracy of the deductions which certain authors have formed, who ascribe to the ancient Hebrews the same enlarged views on the mystery of the Trinity which were afterwards opened up to the evangelists and apostles. It is not denied, indeed, that the terms in which some part of the history of creation is expressed, intimate a plurality in the Divine nature; and moreover, that there are several occurrences mentioned in other portions of the Mosaical writings which prove, that, although Jehovah the Lord is one God, he yet reveals himself as administering the government of this world, under more than one form or person.

The Hebrews, at the very early period now under consideration, held, as the principal article in their theological creed, that the Creator of the world vouchsafed from time to time to appear in a bodily shape to the rulers of his people, and even to other pious individuals, who were selected as the instruments of his special providence. These apparitions, too, as they differed in the number of visible figures, might have suggested to the more reflecting among the Israelites, the main facts of the sacred mystery, the full knowledge of which was reserved for more enlightened times. It pleased God in the infancy of society to teach by actions rather than by words; and it may have been the intention of Divine Wisdom to communicate to the father of the faithful, when he received the visit of the three angels in the plain of Mamre, a scenical representation of the most sublime truth which could be addressed to his understanding.* But still, as no verbal revelation appears to have accompanied the vision, the conception of the grand mystery could not be complete. The number of angels, again, who appeared to Lot was only two.† Jacob, on the memorable occasion described in the thirty-second chapter of Genesis, saw no more than one.‡ The captain of the Lord's host who appeared to Joshua was merely an individual; and the same observation applies to all the heavenly messengers whose interpositions in behalf of Israel are recorded in the book of Judges.§

From these facts every candid reader will agree with the learned Dr Allix, "that the Jews had good grounds to acknowledge some kind of plurality in the Divine nature;"‖ but that their opinions on this most profound

* Genesis xviii. 1, 2. † Genesis xix. 1. ‡ Genesis xxxii. 24. § Joshua—Judges vi. 11.; xiii. 3. ‖ Judgment of the Jewish Church, chap. ix.

and obscure subject, in the period between the exode and the building of the temple, coincided exactly with those of the Christian fathers, has not been established in a satisfactory manner.

That the Israelites arrived at the knowledge of the Trinity by slow degrees, and not till after they had received the instruction of many successive ages, is an opinion which has been held by several learned divines, and especially by the celebrated Cudworth. This doctrine, says he, was not communicated to the world all at once, but insensibly and in small portions. Even the Hebrews were but sparingly informed in regard to this mystery, first by word and afterwards by writing. But upon the birth of our Saviour all darkness was dispelled, and the human race were clearly and fully taught as to what it was right for them to believe concerning the nature of God.*

The literary history of the Jews, prior to the Christian era, supplies so few particulars on which we can rely, that we are compelled to gather their opinions on theological subjects either from the schools of philosophy, which sometimes borrowed and sometimes opposed their doctrines, or from the early fathers of the church, who bestowed much study and considerable learning on the elucidation of the ancient Scriptures. But in neither case is the channel perfectly pure and unobjectionable. The philosophers allowed themselves so much freedom in their speculations, and wrote, besides, in a style so extremely mystical and obscure, that it has become very difficult to find out their real sentiments on any point of theoretical religion. The Christians, again, who enjoyed the benefit

* Cudworth's Intellectual System, vol. i. p. 823. Not having the original at hand, I have translated the above from Mosheim's edition.

of a light which the Jews never possessed, discovered, in the history of the patriarchs, a great deal more than the others were willing to admit; and gave to the institutions and events which distinguished the Mosaical economy an import and a reference which the immediate disciples of that lawgiver appear never to have conjectured.

With respect to the question now before us, there is no doubt that Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Theophilus of Antioch, and Clemens Alexandrinus, drew from the study of the Pentateuch a series of theological positions which were not revealed to Eli or Samuel. The learned fathers now named, illumined by the rays of Divine truth, saw clearly in the books of Moses and in the annals of the Hebrew commonwealth, the most convincing proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Justin, for example, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, maintains that it was Christ who appeared to Abraham under the oak at Mamre. Attend, said he to his antagonist, while I relate to you certain facts out of the sacred writings, which are so plain as to carry conviction at the first hearing. Moses, the blessed servant of God, informs us, that God was seen by Abraham at the oak of Mamre, together with the two angels who attended him; being sent for the punishment of Sodom by that other (God) who always remains in the highest heavens, who never has been seen by any one, who never has conversed immediately with any one, and whom we acknowledge to be the Creator and Parent of all things.*

Theophilus in like manner asserts, that it was the Son

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* Προσιχετε τοιγαρουν ὁιπερ μελλω ἀναμιμνησκειν ἀπο των ἁγιων γραφῶν, ὁυδε ἐξηγηθῆναι δεομενων, αλλα μονον ἀκουθῆναι. Μωσῆς ὁυν ὁ μακαριος και πιστος θεραπων Θεου, μηνευων ὁτι ὁ ὀφθεις τω Ἀβρααμ προς τῃ δρυι τῃ Μαμβρῆ Θεος, συν τοις ἀπα ἀυτῳ ἐπι την Σοδομον κρισιν πεμφθεισι ὁυο ἀγγελοις ὑπο ἄλλου του ἐν τοις ὑπερουρανιοις ἀει μενοντος, και ὁυδενι ὀφθεντος, ἤ ὁμιλησαντος ὁι' ἑαυτου ποτι, ὁν ποιητην των ὁλων καί πατερα νοοῦμεν.—*Justini Opera, Dial. cum Tryphone*, p. 275.

of God who conversed with the first of human beings in the garden of Eden, immediately after the fall. Assuming, says he, the appearance of the Father and Lord of the universe, he came into paradise and had a conversation with Adam.*

Tertullian expresses the very same doctrine in regard to the divinity and offices of Christ under the Old Testament dispensation. "He who spoke to Moses was the Son of God; and it is he who has always appeared. It is the Son who hath judged from the beginning; dashing down the proud tower of Babel, confounding the tongues of the impious race who built it, punishing the whole world with a flood of waters, and raining upon Sodom and Gomorrah a storm of fire and brimstone—the Lord from the Lord. It is he who hath at all times descended to hold converse with men, from the days of Adam to the times of the patriarchs and prophets, in vision, in sleep, in apparition, and in parables, preparing his way without ceasing from the very epoch of creation. The infinite and innumerable things which he was to accomplish, he was ever learning (from his Father); and no other God could hold intercourse with mankind upon earth, but the Word who was to be made flesh."†

To add to the strength of these testimonies, it has been

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* Ἀναλαμβανων το προσωπον του πατρος και κυριου των ὁλων, παρεγινετο εις τον παραδεισον ὡ προσωπῳ του θεου, και ὡμιλει τῳ Ἀδαμ.—*Theoph. ad Autolycum*, lib. ii. p. 100.

† Qui ad Mosen loquebatur ipse erat Dei filius, qui et semper videbatur. —Filius est qui ab initio judicavit, turrem superbissimam elidens,* linguasque disperdens, orbem totum aquarum violentia puniens, pluens super Sodomam et Gomorram ignem et sulphurem, Dominus a Domino. Ipse enim et ad humana semper colloquia descendit, ab Adam usque ad patriarchas et prophetas, in visione, in somno, in speculo, in ænigmate, ordinem suum præstruens ab initio semper. Quæ erat persecuturus infinita, semper ediscebat, et Deus in terris cum hominibus conversari alius non potuit quam Sermo qui caro erat futurus.—*Tertull. Adver. Prax.* cap. 16.

observed, that the doctrine to which they bear record was not first promulgated by the Apostles of our Lord; but derived immediately from the traditions of the Jews, and made known to the world even by writers of that nation before the era of the Christian faith. Among the authors now alluded to, the principal place is occupied by Philo Judæus; who, in his treatise on the character of Abraham, expresses himself as follows, in relation to the divine personages who visited the patriarch in his tent at Mamre:—

"The Father of all things is in the middle, who in the sacred writings is by his proper name called HE THAT IS: but on each side are the Powers which are most ancient and nearest to HIM THAT IS; one of which is called the *creative*, the other the *governing* power. The creative power is called God, for by it he hath placed and set in order all things; and the governing power is called Lord, for it is right that the Maker should govern and command that which is made. He, therefore, who is in the middle, being attended by each of his Powers, represents to the visual intellect, sometimes the phantasm of one, and sometimes of three."*

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* Πατηρ μεν των ὁλων ὁ μεσος, ὃς ἐν ταις ἱεραις γραφαις κυριῳ ὀνοματι καλειται ὁ Ὢν. Αἱ δε παρ' ἑκατερα περισσυνται και ἐγγυταται του Ὀντος Δυναμεις. Ὡν ἡ μεν ποιητικη, ἡ δε βασιλικη προσαγορευεται. Και ἡ μεν ποιητικη θεος: Ταυτη γαρ ἐθηκε και διεκοσμησε το παν: ἡ δε Βασιλικη Κυριος, θεμις γαρ ἀρχειν και κρατειν το πεποιηκος του γενομενου. Δορυφορουμενος ουν ὁ Μεσος ὑφ' ἑκατερας των Δυναμεων παρεχει τῃ ὁρατικῃ διανοιᾳ, ποτε μεν ἑνος, ποτε δε τριων φαντασιαν.

The mysticism which follows by way of accounting for the variation in the number of images or phantasms, cannot be clothed in an intelligible English version. The reader will therefore make what he can of the Latin translation:—

"Unam quando exactissima purgata anima, nec solum ceteram numerorum multitudinem, sed et vicinum unitati binarium supergressa, ad illam simplicem, sinceram, nullius omnius indigam ideam, properat: tres vero, quando nondum *magnis* initiata *mysteriis*, adhuc *minoribus* operatur, nec potest EUM QUI EST, sine alio per se solum, comprehendere, sed per ipsius acta, aut conditorem aut regem omnium.—*Philon. Opera*, p. 287.

The same author, in like manner, asserts that the angel who guided the children of Israel through the wilderness was the Word, the first-begotten Son of the Father, by whom He directs and governs the whole universe.* "For, as if they were a kind of flock, God the Shepherd and King governs by his authority and law, the earth, the water, the air, fire, and whatsover is contained in them, whether of vegetable or animal life, things mortal or divine; and, still farther, the constitution of the heavens, the seasons of the sun and moon, the revolutions and harmonious movements of the other stars; all which He accomplishes by appointing over them his Word, his first-begotten Son, who, as the deputy of a great king, takes upon himself the care of this sacred flock. For it is said in a certain place, Behold here I am, and I will send my angel before thy face to keep thee in the way."†

On the same principle, Philo ascribes to the Word the ministry of vengeance which was inflicted upon the cities of the plains; for when he has quoted the expression in Genesis, "Lot entered into Zoar, and the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah fire and brimstone from heaven," he adds the following remarkable observation:— "When the Word of God arrives in our earthly abode, he assists the friends and patrons of virtue in such a manner as to afford to them the most perfect security and protection; but sends upon their adversaries an inevitable destruction. Ὁ γαρ του Θεου λογος, ὁταν επι το γηωδες ἡμων συσ-

* Exodus xxiii. 20.

† Καθαπερ γαρ τινα ποιμνην, γην, και ὑδωρ, και ἀερα, και πυρ, και ὁσα ἐν τουτοις φυτα τε ἀυ και ζωα, τα μεν θνητα, τα δε θεια, ἐτι δε ὁυρανου φυσιν και ἡλιου και σεληνης περιοδους, και των ἀλλων ἀστερων τροπας τι ἀν και χορειας ἐναρμονιους, ὡς ποιμην και βασιλευς ὁ Θεος ἀγαι κατα δικην και νομον, προσπεταμενος τον ὁρθον ἀυτου λογον πρωτογονον ὑιον, ὁς την ἐπιμελειαν της ἱερας ταυτης ἀγελης, ὡια τι μεγαλου βασιλεως ὑπαρχος διαδεξεται. Και γαρ ἐιρηται που, ἰδου εγω ειμι, ἀποστελω ἀγγελον μου εις προσωπον σου το φυλαξαι σε ἐν τῃ ὁδῳ.—*Philonis Liber de Agricultura*, p. 152, Ed. Colon.

τημα ἀφικηται, τοις μεν ἀρετης συγγενεσι και προς ἀρετην ἐπικλινουσιν, ἀρηγει και βοηθει, ὡς καταφυγην και σωτηριαν ἀυτοις ποριζειν παντελῆ. Τοις δε ἀντιπαλοις ὀλεθρον και φθοραν ἀνιατον ἐπιπεμπει."*

In another place, he speaks of the Word as being "superior to the whole universe, and as the most ancient as well as the most powerful of all beings that exist:" ὑπερανω παντος κοσμου, και πρεσβυτατον, και γενικοτατον των ὁσα γεγονε. He denominates the same essence, the "Word of God which made the world:" θειου λογον κοσμοποιοῦντα: and also, "the invisible, intellectual, divine Word, and Word of God; a supercelestial star, the fountain of all the stars that give light to the earth: τον ἀορατον και νοητον θειον λογον και Θεου λογον; ὑπερουρανιος ἀστηρ, πηγη των αἰσθητων ἀστερων."†

The treatise on the "Formation of the World" is full of similar expressions; and when we call to mind that Philo composed his several pieces before Christianity had introduced to the knowledge of mankind its clearer doctrines on this sacred mystery, we are compelled to admit that though, in the earlier periods of their establishment, the Jews had no distinct notions in regard to the Trinity, they had begun to speculate on this profound subject before their attention could have been called to it by the dogmas of the new religion. Indeed, Eusebius states most distinctly that the Jews were Trinitarians, on the ground and authority of their own sacred writings. "They teach," says he, "that after the essence of God the universal King, which is without beginning and unbegotten, there is a Principle begotten of no other but the Father, being first-begotten, and coadjutor of the Father's counsel, and representing his image; that he is prior to and bears the rule over all things which were afterwards

* Philo de Somniis. † Philo de Mundi opificio, p. 5. Ed. Col.

made, wherefore they use to call him the Image of God, the Power of God, the Wisdom of God, and the Word of God, and also the Captain of the Lord's host, and the Angel of the great council:—the ineffable and infinite power of the God of the universe comprehending all things, and the creating and illuminating power of the Divine Word being second after the Father. Therefore the Jews are pleased to call him the true Light and the Sun of righteousness; and the Holy Spirit being placed the third, immediately after the second essence,—in the order of the moon, which also itself they place in the first and royal dignity and honour of a primary principle —he also being appointed by the Maker of the universe, to be a cause or principle of the things which were afterwards made, I mean the things which were inferior and wanted assistance from him. But he holding the third place confers on his inferiors the excellent virtues in him, but he received them from no other but from God the Word, his superior and better; who, we said, was second to the supreme and unbegotten nature of God, the king of all, from whom God the Word himself receives and draws divinity, springing as it were from a perpetual fountain."*

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* Μετα την ἀναρχον και ἀγεννητον του Θεου παμβασιλειως ουσιαν, την ουκ ἀλλοχεν ἡ εκ του Πατρος γεγεννημενην Αρχην πρωτοτοκον τι ουσαν και συνεργον της του Πατρος βουλης, πως ἀυτον τε ἀπεικονισμενην διδασκουσι. κ. τ. λ.

But instead of copying the Greek, which does not so readily suit the eye of the common reader, I shall here satisfy myself with the Latin version.

"Ergo post illum, cujus nec principium nec ortus ullus est, Dei præpotentis essentiam, Principium illud statuunt quod nec aliundè quam ex ipso Patri genitum, adeoque primogenitum sit, quodque paterni consilii ac voluntatis adjutor, integram atque perfectam ipsius imaginem referat. Hoc porro longe multumque rebus, quæ satæ postea sunt, omnibus antecellere: quam ob rem, illud modo Dei imaginem, modo Dei potentiam, modo Dei sapientiam, modo Dei Verbum, imo et summum Domini exercitus Imperatorem, et magni Consilii Angelum appellare solent,—ut vis illa quidem immensa Dei præpotentis, omnique oratione major, confertim et simul universa com-

It must be acknowledged, that Philo is the principal Jewish authority to whom Eusebius appeals for the accuracy of the view which he has given of the Hebrew theology, on the main point now under consideration. Those, therefore, who are unwilling to admit the extreme antiquity of this doctrine, attempt to invalidate, not so much the ground on which the author of the Evangelical Preparation has established his inferences, as the commentaries and interpretations of the Alexandrian Jew, from whose writings he drew his most valuable materials. The school of Socinus maintains that Philo was a Platonist; and consequently that he received his trinitarian notions from the learned disquisitions of the Academy, and not from the sacred records of his own people, who were unacquainted with such a doctrine. But a long controversy, in the course of which a great deal of research and erudition was displayed, has not satisfactorily determined this interesting question; and, without such an addition to our historical knowledge as is not to be expected, it must for ever remain doubtful whether Philo owed most to the sage of Greece or to the inspired author of the Pentateuch. On a point which has exhausted the learning of Petavius,

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prehendat: tum Patrem consequatur Verbi Divini potentia, quæ reliqua pariter et moliatur et illustrat, quam ob causam, lux vera, et Justitiæ sol ab Hebræis nominari consueverit. Deinde post secundam illam Naturam, Lunae quasi locq Sancti Spiritus Natura succedat, quem ipsi quoque in principe illa regiaque hujus universitatis principii dignitate graduque constituunt, quòd illum etiam rerum earum, quæ natæ postea sunt, hoc est, quæ inferiorem in ordinem classemque conjectæ, ipsius ope ac benignitate indigeant, principium summus rerum Architectus omnium esse voluerit. Porro sic ille tertium locum obtinens, diviniarum quibus abundat facultatum atque virtutum rebus humilioribus copiam facit, ut ipse vicissim ab altero quodam, hoc est a Deo Verbo, suas opes accipiat, quem paulo ante secundum a summa illa Dei præpotentis, ortuque carente natura posuimus."—*Euseb. Præ. Evan.* lib. vii. cap. 15.

Similar observations are to be found in the twelfth chapter of the same book, entitled Περι της του δευτερου αιτιου θεολογιας, "*Hebræorum de Secundo Principio Theologia.*"

Leclerc, Allix, Kidder, Bull, Grotius, Cudworth, and Mosheim, it would be presumptuous in me to hazard an opinion. I may, however, be permitted to observe, that, though there is good ground to believe that the current of Jewish tradition, as well as the favourite learning of the ages immediately before the introduction of the Gospel, afford much countenance to the doctrine of the Trinity, there is yet to be found in the works of Philo, a great variety of opinions and speculations which he could not have derived from the books of Moses or of the prophets.*

It is, at the same time, perfectly obvious, that the notions entertained by Pagan writers on the nature of the Deity did not strictly coincide with the doctrine of the Apostles. In an able work on this subject by Dr Randolph, the late bishop of London, there is an extract from a similar treatise by a friend of his, which supplies some strong facts in support of the opinion now stated; proving, indeed, that till about the middle of the third century of our era, the Platonic philosophers did not advance a single hypothesis which recognized the existence of three persons in the Godhead, possessing qualities suitable to the Divine mind. "After all the learned and ingenious disquisitions of many eminent moderns on this subject, it appears, I must own, very doubtful to me whether any of the Pagans before our Saviour's time, not excepting even Plato himself, held the doctrine of a Trinity in any proper sense of the word. Some of the later Pla-

* Nulli, qui sine partium studio *Philonem* inspexit, obscurum esse potest, dominari in scriptis ejus, philosophiæ quoddam genus, cujus in sacris antiqui fœderis libris nullum prorsus reperias vestigium: nec vereri Judæum hunc, quæ apud Mosen, divinum Scriptorem, leguntur, vel facta vel dicta, ex philosophiæ hujus lege interpretari et explicare. Sane aut animi libertate aut candore destitutum oportet esse, qui hoc negaverit, atque ex Mose sacrisque Hebræorum voluminibus hausta esse universa, quæ Philoni tueri placuit, conteriderit.—*Mosh. Notæ in Cud.* vol. i. p. 829.

tonists, indeed, such as Proclus and Damascius, and before them Syrianus, Jamblichus, and Plotinus, have asserted, as they often do other things, very hastily, that such a doctrine was taught in the old Orphic theology and mysteries, and from thence came down to Pythagoras and Parmenides, and others of that sect. They allege, too, the ancient Chaldeans and Egyptians for much the same notions, in the oracles of the one and Hermetic books of the other; and several learned moderns, even our excellent Cudworth himself, have been led away by these Platonists, who make a great show of parts and learning, to ascribe the same antiquity and extent to this doctrine among the heathens. But when you come to the proof of these things, you have nothing truly solid and satisfactory; no text of ancient writers before our Saviour's time, plain and full to the purpose; not even a single fragment of the old Orphic verses, or a line of Pythagoras, or Parmenides, or Egyptians, or Chaldeans, to the point. But it is only either something of recent date since the Gospel, or of doubtful authority at the best; or, more frequently, it is only what this or that modern Platonist reports or imagines of former times, or some gloss of theirs on the Orphic, or Parmenides's poems, when the poems themselves show nothing at all of such meanings."*

The most zealous advocate for primitive orthodoxy must admit the justness of the above remarks. Even Dr Allix acknowledges the vague and inconsistent language which is used on this subject by ancient writers, and particularly by the Jewish commentators on the Old Testament. "After all that I have alleged out of Philo and the Paraphrases, I do not pretend to affirm that they had

* A Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, &c. By Thomas Randolph, D.D. Part III. p. 50, 51, 52.

as distinct notions of the Trinity as we have; nor do I deny but that sometimes they put a different construction on the texts which we have cited in proof of this mystery; nay, I own that their ideas are often confused when they speak of these things; and particularly they refer that to the second Person which should be ascribed to the third, and that to the third which properly belongs to the second; nay more, I acknowledge that Philo by the spirit, in Genesis i. 2., understands the wind;* which is something strange, seeing the Greek interpreters, whom he followed, read πνυμα Θεου, the Spirit of God, and not simply the Spirit, which might have stood for wind here, as it does in some places of the Old Testament."—"But Philo's error is easily accounted for: he fell into it by endeavouring to accommodate Moses' notions to the notions of that philosophy which makes four elements of all things. And, probably, for such a reason, some of the Targums might come into the same interpretation."—"I know Philo expresses his thoughts obscurely: speaking of the two Powers of God, he saith that the Word joins these two Powers, which he afterwards calls his *principality* and his *goodness*."† "It shows, indeed, that our author, who had gathered his notions, as the other Jews did, by reading the books of the Old Testament together with their traditional interpretations, was not so much master of them as to make them always consist with one another. Others perhaps will say, he was not always consistent with himself; nor am I concerned to have it granted that he was so."‡

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* Philo De Gigantibus. † Philo de Cherub.

‡ Allix's Judgment of the Jewish Church against the Unitarians, chap. x. p. 124.

In reference to the two Powers, the creative and the ruling energies, which, according to Philo, attended the Ὁ Ὤν, or First Principle, one of

The reader, it is presumed, will now be ready to join with me in the conclusion which I am about to draw from the facts and reasonings adduced in the foregoing pages; namely, that until Christianity was established in the world by the ministry of the Apostles, neither Jews nor Heathens, though both of them entertained certain notions about a plurality in the Divine nature, possessed accurate views in respect to the doctrine of the Trinity.

In illustrating the argument contained in this section, I have purposely avoided all reference to the doctrines of Brahminical writers, as having no necessary connection with the history of theological opinion among the posterity of Israel. But every scholar is aware, that the philosophers of Hindostan entertained, respecting the Divine hypostasis, notions very similar to those which afterwards prevailed in Greece among the Pythagoreans and Platonists. The former held, as well as the latter, that, besides the το ἑν, the fountain of existence, there were other three principles, the το ἀγαθον, νους, and ψυχη; which, under a somewhat different view, were represented as the Creator, the Preserver, and the Destroyer; that is, according to the Indian mythology, Brahma, Vishnou, and Seeva.

In the several heresies which were founded upon the Manichæan hypothesis, we have still remaining some ves-

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them being on each side, and He in the middle, a curious interpretation is given of the 13th verse of the 48th chapter of Isaiah: "Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them they stand up together." According to the author of the Targums, the *two hands* are the δυο δυναμεις, the two Αρχαι, the Θεος and the κυριος.

A similar commentary is made on the 17th verse of the 15th chapter of Exodus, "Thou shalt bring them in and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, the sanctuary, O Lord, which thine *hands* have established." The hands here again are the two powers, or virtues, or energies, which accompany the τ' ἀγαθον; and which, agreeably to the Platonic phraseology, would be called the νους, and the ψυχη.

tiges of that ancient dogma. The Marcionites, for instance, taught their disciples, that, in addition to the great First Cause who was called the Good, and the Evil Principle who delighted in pain and sorrow, there was a third Principle, denominated the Middle One, or Mediator, who was known by the name of the Just. The office of this last divinity was to distribute even awards to mankind, according to their several deserts. The Good could not punish, because the infliction of pain was incompatible with his nature: the Evil could not be intrusted with the discrimination of human character, because he was prone to vengeance; it was, therefore, reserved for the Just to render to every man according to his works with the strictest equity, and without any feeling of compassion or revenge. To those who conform themselves to the Good, the Middle Principle grants peace; but upon such as obey the suggestions of the Evil, the same inflicts tribulation and anguish. Ἡ δυν Μεση αρχη ὑπηκοουσι τῳ Αγαθῳ ἀνεσιν διδωσι, ὑπηκοουσι δε τῳ πονηρῳ θλιψιν διδωσι.*

The resemblance and affinity which subsist among the tenets that were held on this subject, by all the Asiatic nations, even in the most remote times, confirm very strongly their eastern origin. Warburton and his followers have attempted to trace to Egypt the leading principles which characterized the opinions of the Greeks, both in philosophy and theology; describing the Brahmans, the Magians, and the Druids, as the offspring of the learned priests who presided over the mysteries at Memphis and the city of the Sun. But, till a period comparatively recent, we find not amongst the latter any

* Hieron. Dialog. cont. Marcionem, quoted by Warburton, book iii. sec. 4.

indication of the doctrines which we are now examining; and it is worthy of remark, that, by the writers of antiquity, who possessed the surest means of information, this whole system of theistic speculation is attributed to a great teacher in the East. In a word, the more we shall inquire, the less room will there be for doubt, that most of the notions on this interesting topic, which so long employed the ingenuity and warmed the zeal of the Jews, the Christians, and the philosophers, took their rise in the more distant parts of Asia, and afterwards spread through the states of Babylon and Persia to the banks of the Nile and the islands of Greece. A more extended investigation, therefore, will probably invert the opinion of Warburton; and prove that the Egyptians, Magi, and Druids, were in fact the offspring of the Brahmans, those fathers of mental science, theology, and literature.

II. The second section of this chapter has for its object an inquiry into the opinions and belief of the ancient Hebrews, in reference to the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments.

On this very obscure subject, the conclusions to which we shall arrive, will, it is obvious, be determined in a great measure by the limits, in respect of times and persons, to which we may deem it expedient to restrict the question. If we confine our inquiry to the period of Moses and the Judges, and content ourselves with ascertaining what was then the popular belief in regard to the condition of the human being after death, we shall probably find that the congregation of Israel, both while in the wilderness and for a long time after their settlement in the promised land, had no such ideas of the future existence of the soul as were necessarily connected with the expectation of reward or punishment. Were we, on the other hand, to extend our review over a wider field of sacred history,

and include the various events and revelations which filled up the space from the call of Abraham to the Babylonish captivity, we should, without doubt, discover many unquestionable tokens of that sublime faith, which, through the medium of rites and ordinances, was enabled to realize the hopes of a blessed eternity.

At the very portal of this interesting investigation, we are met by the opinions of the ingenious Warburton, as also by those of the several learned writers who thought proper to oppose the doctrines which he maintained in his celebrated work on the divine legation of Moses.

But it is admitted on both sides, that, whatever might be the degree of knowledge possessed by Moses himself and the other leaders of the Hebrew tribes, in respect to future retribution, the doctrine of immortality and of reward and punishment in the unseen world was not employed by that inspired legislator as the sanction of his laws, nor as the motive of obedience to the government which he established among the descendants of Jacob. It will be farther acknowledged by every candid reader, that, in perusing the books which contain the principles of the Mosaical constitution, as well as the earlier parts of the civil history of the people for whose benefit it was devised, we perceive not any direct statement, nor even a single unambiguous allusion, which could, on the ordinary rules of interpretation, be converted into an argument for the belief of a future state.

It has been asserted, indeed, that the inspired lawgiver of the Hebrews was himself perfectly well informed in relation to this important tenet, but that he found it expedient to conceal it from the mass of the people under his care; and even that, when he had occasion to record events which almost necessarily implied the belief of eternal life under a happier mode of existence, he purposely abridged

the narrative, or expressed it in such vague and general language as to render it obscure. In the history of Enoch's translation to heaven, for example, there is, says Warburton, so studied an obscurity, that several of the Rabbins, as Aben Ezra and Jarchi, fond as they are of finding a future state in the Pentateuch, interpret this translation as only signifying an immature death. Moses, he adds, both knew and *believed* the immortality of Enoch, and purposely obscured the fact from whence it might have been collected.*

That the divine leader of the Hebrews concealed from them a doctrine so extremely important, whether viewed in relation to their conduct in this world or their hopes towards the next, is a position which no reader will admit without the most diligent inquiry into the narrative whence it is supposed to be derived. To withhold from his people whatever knowledge he possessed, on a point of all others the most interesting, could not but seem to betray an equal want of feeling and of honesty; on which account, the greater number of theologians and biblical critics have concluded, that, although Moses did not find it expedient to introduce formally into his system of government the powerful sanction of a future state, he might nevertheless give countenance to the traditional opinions on this subject, which are supposed, even at that remote period, to have been entertained by the Israelites. Still, it must be granted that the following description, extracted from the pages of the Divine Legation, does not in any degree violate the truth of sacred history.

"We now advance a step farther, and show that as

* Le Clerc, it should seem, was of the same opinion:—"Mirum est Mosem rem tantam, si modo immortalem Henochum factum credidit, tam *obiter*, *tamque obscure*, *quasi eam latere vellet*, perstrinxisse. Forte cum hæc ex antiquissimis monumentis exscriberit, nihil præter ea quæ nobis tradidit invenit, quibus aliquid adjicere religio fuit.—*Vid. Com. in Gen.* v. 24.

Moses did not teach, yea, forbore to teach the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments, so neither had the ancient Jews, that is to say, the body of the people, any knowledge of it. The proof is striking, and scarce to be resisted by any party or profession, but that of the system-maker. The Bible contains a very circumstantial account of this people, from the time of Moses to the great captivity; not only the history of public occurrences, but the lives of private persons of both sexes, and of all ages, conditions, characters, and complexions; in the adventures of virgins, matrons, kings, soldiers, scholars, parents, merchants, husbandmen. They are given too in every circumstance of life; captive, victorious, in sickness and in health; in full security and amidst impending dangers; plunged in civil business, or retired and sequestered in the service of religion. Together with their story we have their compositions likewise: in one place we hear their triumphal, in another their penitential strains. Here we have their exultations for blessings received; there, their deprecations of evil apprehended: here they urge their moral precepts to their *contemporaries;* and there again, they treasure up their prophecies and predictions for the use of *posterity;* and on each denounce the threatenings and promises of Heaven. Yet in none of these different circumstances of life, in none of these various casts of composition, do we ever find them acting on the motives, or influenced by the prospect of a *future state;* or indeed expressing the least hopes or fears or even common curiosity respecting it: but every thing they do or say respects the present life only; the good and ill of which are the sole objects of their pursuits and aversions."*

* Divine Legation, book vi. section 6.

Dr Graves, though opposed to Warburton on the general argument, finds it necessary to agree with him on the point now stated. "True it is, the peculiar purposes of the divine economy did not permit the Jewish lawgiver to employ it as the sanction of his laws, which were to be enforced by an immediate extraordinary Providence, and therefore he was not allowed to promulgate it so plainly as to make it a direct article of the popular creed; but it was intimated with sufficient clearness to be discernible to minds of a superior class, capable of reflection, and adapted to rise to greater heights of piety."*

A later author, who likewise endeavours to invalidate the inferences of the Divine Legation, finds himself also compelled to admit, that "the information given to the ancient believers of the doctrine of immortality, though they had occasionally plainer intimations on the subject superadded to their typical institutions, was certainly in its best form defective and obscure. But it was suited to the dispensation under which they lived, and was sufficiently understood to answer the purposes of practical religion."†

No position in theology, indeed, is more unquestionable than that now under consideration; for, assuredly, if we restrict our inquiries to the Pentateuch, and take the language of the inspired writer in its direct and literal signification, we shall not find the doctrine of future reward and punishment among the institutes of Moses; nay, not so much as alluded to by him, to illustrate or enforce the moral precepts which he founded upon his ritual ordinances. For a sanction to his laws he trusted entirely to the special providence under which the Israel-

* Lectures on the four last Books of the Pentateuch, &c. By the Rev. Richard Graves, D.D.

† Discourses on the Evidences of the Jewish and Christian Revelations, by Sir Henry Moncreiff Wellwood, Bart.

ites were placed: and, as this peculiar administration continued many years after the people took possession of the land of Canaan, the ordinary motives which induce men to follow virtue and flee from crime, were neither revealed nor applied to the sons of Jacob. It was not till a period considerably later, that the doctrine of immortality was fully comprehended by the worshippers of Jehovah. The prophets, by means of a reflected light, were enabled to perceive that their ancient law had a spiritual import; and that the figures in it, which alone were seen by the carnal eye of their forefathers, bore a clear reference to things which were not seen and eternal.*

The view which is here given of the ancient economy is confirmed by the judgment of our best commentators. If it be asked, says Bishop Bull, whether there is in the Old Testament any promise of eternal life, I reply in the words of Augustine, that we should begin by defining what we mean by the Old Testament; for the words may

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* In tota Lege Mosaica nullum vitæ æternæ præmium, ac ne aeterni quidem præmii *indicium vel vestigium* extat: quodquod nunc Judæi multum de futuro seculo, de resurrectione mortuorum, de vita aeterna loquantur, et ex Legis verbis ea extorquere potius quam ostendere conentur, ne Legem Mosis imperfectam esse cogantur agnoscere eum Sadducæis; quos olim (et, uti observo ex scriptis Rabbinorum, hodieque) vitam futuri seculi Lege Mosis nec promitti nec contineri adfirmasse, quum tamen Judæi essent, certissimum est. Nempe non nisi per Cabalam sive Traditionem, quam illi in universum rejiciebant, opinionem sive fidem illam irrepsisse asserebant. Et sane opinionum, quæ inter Judæos erat, circa vitam futuri seculi discrepantia, arguit promissiones Lege factas tales esse, ut ex iis certi quod de vita futuri seculi non possit colligi. Quod et Servator noster non obscurè innuit, cum resurrectionem mortuorum colligit, Math. xxii. non ex promisso aliquo Legi addito, sed ex generali tantum illo promisso Dei, quo se Deum Abrahami, Isaaci, et Jacobi futurum spoponderat: quæ tamen illa collectio magis nititur cognitione intentionis divinæ sub generalibus istis verbis occultatæ aut comprehensæ, de qua Christo certo constabat, quam necessaria consequentia, sive verborum vi ac virtute manifestâ, qualis nunc et in verbis Novi Testamenti, ubi vita æterna et resurrectio mortuorum proram et puppim faciunt totius religionis Christianæ, et tam clarè ac disertè promittuntur ut ne hiscere quidem contra quis possit.—*Just. Theol.* lib. iii. sect. 1, 2, 3.

be applied either to the covenant which was made at Mount Sinai, or to all the writings which are contained in the books of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets. If the Old Testament be taken in the latter sense, it may perhaps be granted, that there are in it some not obscure indications of a future life, particularly in the book of Psalms, Daniel, and Ezekiel; although even in these, it is with the greatest difficulty, and scarcely even then, that we can discover any clear and distinct promise of eternal life. But these, whatever they were, are to be regarded only as preludes and anticipations of the Gospel revelation, and not as belonging to the Law. For the Law, so far as we are to consider the disputations which the Apostle had with the Jews, properly means the covenant which was entered into at Sinai, as will appear from Galatians iv. 24.: and the promises of that law respected this earth, and this earth only, as may be seen Exodus xxiii. 25, 26.; Leviticus xxvi. 3.; and Deuteronomy vii. 12, 13., and xviii. 2. If any person entertain a different opinion on this subject, let him point out the place where the promise of eternal life exists; which I declare to be certainly impossible.' After quoting and commenting upon the promise made to the Israelites, I will be thy God and will bless you, he proceeds, 'That eternal life was comprehended in the Divine intention when he pronounced these words, is manifest from the interpretation of Christ himself and of his Apostles, Matt. xxii. 31, 32.; Heb. xi. 16. But these inferences cannot authorise us to assert that eternal life was promised in the Mosaical covenant. For, first, all promises, and particularly such as are annexed to a covenant, ought to be clear and distinct, and of such a nature as to be easily understood by both the contracting parties. But the promises here are at once typical, and expressed in such general terms, that, without an in-

terpretation drawn from some other quarter, it would be utterly impossible to understand them in the sense which they profess to bear. In a word, the Law, when viewed carnally and according to the letter, neither accomplished spiritual righteousness, nor promised eternal life: Viewed spiritually, indeed, it was the very gospel itself."*

All divines are accordingly agreed, that, upon the commencement of the regal government among the Hebrews, the notions of immortality which had only floated down the stream of time, began to settle and expand, and to become he foundation of a religious system at once more reasonble and sublime. Then did the children of Israel learn o perceive, that, in the sacrifice of Abel, the translation f Enoch, the faith of Abraham, the vision of Jacob,

* Quæritur an in Veteri Testamento nullum omnino extet vitæ æternæ romissum? De eo enim a nonnullis dubitatur. Huic quæstioni optime nihi videtur respondere Augustinus, distinguens nomen Veteris Testamenti: nam eo intelligi, ait, aut pactum illud quod in Monte Sinai factum st, aut omnia quæ in Mose, Hagiographis, ac Prophetis continentur. Si Vetus Testamentum posteriori sensu accipiatur, concedi forsitan possit, esse n eo nonnulla futuræ vitæ non obscura indicia; præsertim in libro Psalmorum, Daniele, et Ezekiele; quanquam vel in his libris clarum ac disertum æternæ vitæ promissum vix ac ne vix quidem reperias. Sed hæc qualiaunque erant, non erant nisi preludia et anticipationes gratiæ Evangelicæ; ad Legem non pertinebant. Lex enim quatenus ab Apostolo in suis cum Judæis disputationibus consideratur, proprie designat pactum in Sinai factum. Vide Gal. iv. 22. Illud autem promissa habuit terrena, et terrena antum, ut videre est, Exod. xxiii. 25, 26.; Levit. xxvi. 23.; Deut. vii. 12, 13.; and xviii. 2. &c. Si quis contra sentiat, ejus est locum dare, ubi æternæ vitæ promissio extat; *quod certe impossibile est*,—Sub his autem verbis (Ego ero Deus tuus, &c.) Dei intentione comprehensam fuisse vitam æternam, ex interpretatione ipsius Christi ejusque Apostolorum manifestum est. Vide Matt. xxii.; Heb. xi. 16. &c. Verum hæc non sufficiunt, ut dicamus, vitam æternam in Fœdere Mosaico promissam fuisse. Nam primo, promissa, præsertim Fœderi annexa, debent esse clara ac diserta, et ejusmodi, ut ab utraque parte stipulante intelligi possint. Promissa autem hæc typica et generalia, non addita aliunde interpretatione, pene impossibile erat ut quis isto sensu intelligerit. Verbo dicam: Lex carnaliter et secundum literam spectata nec spiritualem justitiam exegit, nec vitam æternam promisit; spiritualiter vero considerata, erat ipsissimum Evangelium.—*Bulli Opera. Harm. Apost. Diss. Posterior*, cap. x. sect. 8. p. 72. Editio 703.

and indeed in the general tenor and aspect of the Levitical institution, there were shadowed forth the principles of a purer faith, and an outline of the more exalted doctrines which respect eternal life.*

But these clearer views belong not to the ancient period, the history of which is my peculiar province. We are not supplied with any evidence that the Hebrew people, during the government of the Judges, cherished even the most distant belief in the immortality of the soul, considered as the basis of the still more important doctrine of future reward and punishment. Moses, as has been remarked by the learned Grotius, promised to the Israelites nothing besides the good things of the present life; a fruitful soil, abundance of food, victory over their enemies, a long life and health, and children destined to survive them. For, says he, if there be any thing more than I have now mentioned, it is concealed in darkness, and must be drawn forth by deep and difficult ratiocination.†

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* Warburton observes, "As my position is, that *a future state of reward and punishment was not taught in the Mosaic dispensation*, all texts brought to prove the knowledge after the time of David are as impertinent as the rest. For what was known from this time could not supply the want of what was unknown for so many ages before."—*Divine Legation*, book v. sect. 1. "That from *Moses and the prophets together* a future state might be collected, is a proposition I have no occasion to oppose. For when the prophets are joined to Moses, and have explained the spiritual meaning of his Law, and developed the hidden sense of it, I may well allow that from both together a learned Pharisee might collect the truth of the doctrine, without receding one tittle from my argument."—*Divine Legation*, book vi. sect. 4. "Having shown that by the faith here said to be so extensive among the Jewsh people, is meant *faith in those promises of God which related to their own dispensation*, all the weight of this objection is removed. For as to the *promises seen afar off and believed and embraced*, which gave the prospect of a *better country*, that is, *a heavenly*, these are confined to the patriarchs and leaders of the Jewish people. And that *they* had this distant prospect, I am as much concerned to prove as my adversaries themselves."—*Divine Legation, as above.*

† Moses in Religionis Judaicæ institutione, si diserta Legis respicimus, nihil promisit supra hujus vitæ bona, terram uberem, penum copiosum, vic-

The Hebrews, it is very certain, acted upon the views here described by Grotius, during several hundred years after the death of their divine legislator; seeking no other evidence that they were under the special protection of heaven besides abundance in their harvests and success in their wars. But though the doctrine of future reward and punishment was at no time made the sanction of the Mosaical economy, it does not follow that the Israelites, even at the early period of which the history is contained in the book of Judges, had not some knowledge of the imperishable nature of the soul, as well as of a separate state of existence, in which the thinking principle exercised its powers independently of the body.

That they possessed such knowledge is rendered extremely probable, *first*, from their long residence in Egypt, where the immortality of the soul was maintained as the principal basis of a theological system; and *secondly*, from the language which we find employed in the Pentateuch respecting the state of man after death.

1*st*, As to the tenet now mentioned, there is no doubt that it was held in Egypt at a period considerably more ancient than the descent of Jacob with his family into the kingdom of the Pharaohs. Herodotus assures us, that the Egyptians were the first of mankind who defended the doctrine of the soul's immortality. They believe, says he, that on the dissolution of the body the soul immediately enters some other animal, and that, after using as vehicles every species of terrestrial, aquatic, and winged creatures, it finally enters a second time into a human body. They affirm, that it undergoes all these changes in

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tcriam de hostibus, longam et valentem senectutem, posteros cum bona spe superstites. Nam si quod est ultra, in umbris obtegitur, aut sapienti et difficili ratiocinatione colligendum est.

the space of three thousand years.* Diodorus Siculus countenances the same opinion; and almost every writer on eastern antiquities has attributed to the belief that the soul exists after death, and is destined to re-occupy the mortal frame with which it was originally connected, the great pains and expense which were bestowed by the people of Egypt on the preservation of their dead bodies. In that country mummies were embalmed and pyramids were constructed to preserve the ancient mansion of the soul, during the specified period of three thousand years.†

The Egyptians, says Warburton, as we are assured by the concurrent testimony of antiquity, were amongst the first who taught that the soul survived the body and was *immortal*. Not, like the Greek sophists, for speculation, but for a support to their practical doctrine of reward and punishment; and every thing being done in Egypt for the sake of society, a future state was enforced to secure the general doctrine of a providence. But still there would remain great difficulties concerning *the origin of evil*, which seemed to affect the moral attributes of God. And it was not enough for the purposes of society that there was a Divine Providence, unless that Providence was understood to be perfectly good and just. Some solution therefore was to be given; and a better could not well be found than the notion of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, without which, in the opinion of Hierocles, the ways of Providence are not to be justified. The necessary consequence of this doctrine was, that the soul is older than the body: so having taught before that the soul was eternal, *a parte post*, and now that it had an

* Πρωτοι δε και τονδε τον λογον Αιγυπτιοι ειπον οι ειποντες, ως ανθρωπου ψυχη αθανατος εστι. Του σωματος δε καταφθινοντος ες αλλο ζωον αιει γινομενον ισδυεσθαι. —*Herod. Euterpe*, 123.

† Diod. Sicul. Bibliot. Hist. lib. i. c. 90, 91, 92. Gibbon's Decline and Fall.

existence before it came into the body, the Greeks, to give a rounding to their system, taught, as the foundation of its pre-existence, that it was eternal, too, *a parte ante*. This is no precarious conjecture; for Suidas, after having told us that Pherecydes had no master, but struck every thing out of his own thoughts, adds, *that he had procured certain secret Phenician books*. Now we know from Eusebius's account of Sanchoniatho, and the famous fragment there preserved, that these secret Phenician books contained the Egyptian wisdom and learning.*

If any connection is to be traced between the funeral cares of the Egyptians and their belief in the separate existence of the soul, there cannot be any doubt, that, before the days of the patriarch Joseph, the philosophers of the Nile cultivated the doctrine of immortality. That such a connection did subsist is confirmed by a remark of Diodorus Siculus concerning the inhabitants of Memphis, and of the adjacent country. These people, he assures us, regarded the term of human life as bounded by very narrow limits, and, therefore, manifested the greatest anxiety to leave behind them a high reputation for virtue. On this principle they called the dwellings of the living by the name of *tents*, because they were to occupy them only a very short time; whereas they denominated the sepulchres of the dead *eternal mansions*, because they were to pass an infinite age with the gods below. For the same reason they were little solicitous about the structure of their houses; whilst upon their tombs they lavished the utmost care and expense.†

* Divine Legation, book iii. sect. 4.

† Οἱ γαρ ἐγχωριοι τον μεν ἐν τω ζῃν χρονον ἐυτιλῆ παντελως εἶναι νομιζουσι, τον δε μετα την τελευτην δι' ἀριστην μνημονευθησομενοι, περι πλειστου ποιουνται. Και τας μεν των ζωντων οἰκησεις καταλυσεις ὀνομαζουσιν, ὡς ὀλιγον χρονον ἐν ταυταις οἰκουν των ἡμων, τους δε των τετιλευκητων ταφους ἀἰδιους οἰκους προσαγορευουσιν, ὡς ἐν ᾅδου δια τελουντων τον ἀπειρον αἰωνα. Διοπερ τῶν μεν κατα τας οἰκιας κατασκευων ἡττον φροντιζουσι.—*Diod. Siculus*, lib. 1, cap. 51. *Edit. Bipont*, 1792.

It is true, indeed, that no work by any profane author extends so far back, nor affords any certain evidence in support of the conclusion which has just been stated. Pythagoras himself, who travelled into Egypt, in order to acquire the science, and to obtain some acquaintance with the mysteries, which had already given celebrity to the priesthood of that country, must be viewed as a modern when compared to the supposed antiquity of the opinions now under consideration. He made his appearance in Italy during the reign of Tarquinius Superbus, who did not ascend the throne till about six centuries before the Christian era;* so that, prior to the rise of philosophy in Greece, there had elapsed from the death of Joseph, (whose body was embalmed after the manner of the Egyptians,) not less than a thousand years.

On a question, then, which refers to a period so very remote, we must not decide with haste or confidence. Deprived of nearly all the light which belongs to contemporaneous history, we cannot satisfactorily determine what the sages of On taught in regard to the nature of the human soul and its condition after death. But as we are assured by the unanimous voice of antiquity, that the Egyptians were very slow to receive the doctrines of foreign countries, and changed their own religious opinions with the greatest reluctance, we may, perhaps, venture to conclude that the tenets which they held when they were visited by the philosopher of Samos, had descended to them through a long line of progenitors. This conjecture, too, receives no small countenance from the fact, that, during the several ages which fill up the long space from Moses to Pythagoras, the kingdom of Egypt sus-

* Cum, Superbo regnante, in Italiam venisset, &c. *Cicero, Tusc. Disput.* lib. i. c. 16.

tained no such shock either from war or internal commotion, as was likely to introduce into science and theology any material innovation, at least in point of principle.

If, therefore, we may be allowed, from the doctrines which were imported into Italy and Greece in the days of Tarquinius Superbus, to form a judgment in respect to those which were propagated in Egypt prior to the exode of the Israelites under Moses, we shall find ourselves necessarily drawn to the conclusion, that the subjects of Pharaoh did in fact entertain certain obscure opinions on the immortality of the soul, and a future state of reward and punishment. In a word, there is little reason to doubt that the doctrine of the metempsychosis was already introduced among the Egyptians; and hence, as they believed that the soul was imperishable, and destined to exist to all eternity, they were taught to regulate their actions upon a reference to the favour or disapprobation of the immortal gods.

It is proved by the most satisfactory evidence, that the doctrine now mentioned was borrowed by the Greeks from Egypt; and also that it was supposed to have been held in the latter country from the most ancient times. That Pythagoras found it there as one of the principal tenets of the sacred schools, will be admitted by every one who has the smallest acquaintance with oriental antiquities; and that it made part of the wisdom of Egypt in the time of Moses, is rendered exceedingly probable by the peculiar nature of the religious system which he instituted among the Hebrews. But a little inquiry into this important subject will, perhaps, satisfy the reader that the lawgiver of the Israelites, instead of industriously concealing from his people the knowledge of a future state of reward and punishment, did not himself possess those clear views in regard to the condition of man after death,

upon which alone the doctrine of retribution could have been satisfactorily established among the sons of Jacob.

It is, no doubt, the opinion of many learned writers, that the priests of Egypt introduced into their religious creed the tenet of the metempsychosis, as a basis on which they might found the practical belief and defence of a Divine Providence. As their general hypothesis on the nature of the human soul led directly to the conclusion, that after death the thinking principle returned to the great Spirit whence it had proceeded, and was to be absorbed for ever in its boundless essence; they perceived, that, on this narrow ground, there was no room for establishing the important doctrine which teaches men that the sins which they commit in the present world, shall be visited upon them in the world to come.

To obviate this main disadvantage, the priests and lawgivers found it necessary to engraft upon their original faith the subordinate tenet of the metempsychosis; which was meant to convey to the people the unquestionable assurance, that, according to their habits and inclinations in the actual state of existence through which they were passing, their souls would be condemned to occupy the bodies of animals more or less polluted; until, after a series of transmigrations, they should be fitted to enjoy everlasting blessedness in the bosom of the Eternal Spirit. The soul, said they, must shift and change its habitation, so that the coward will be ignominiously thrust into the body of a woman; the murderer imprisoned within the fur of a wild beast; the lascivious condemned to animate a boar or a goat; the vain and inconstant will be changed into birds; and the slothful and ignorant into animals which inhabit the waters. The dispensation of all these things is committed to Nemesis, the avenger, together with the infernal furies her assessors and the inspectors

of human action, to whom God, the sovereign Lord of all things, has committed the government of the world.*

But this, it is acknowledged, was a mere popular accommodation of their more general doctrine, that the soul of man is finally absorbed in the great Soul of the world,—the fountain of all existence spiritual and corporeal. The belief of the metempsychosis, in short, was esteemed necessary to the well-being of society, as connected with the expectation of future reward and punishment. For, says Timæus, as we sometimes cure the body with unwholesome remedies, when such as are most wholesome have no effect, so we restrain those minds by *false* relations, which will not be persuaded by the *truth*. There is a necessity, therefore, of instilling the dread of those torments, the belief of which we have derived from foreign countries.†

The remarks just made apply, indeed, in a particular manner, to the doctrine of transmigration as adopted by Pythagoras, and taught by him to the philosophers of Greece; for it seems clearly established that almost all the disciples of this celebrated master, including even Plato himself, afterwards drew from his principles such inferences as were utterly subversive of all moral qualities in the divine government. It is, no doubt, maintained by Warburton, that, though the metempsychosis, when it was first brought from Egypt, signified a *moral designation of Providence*, and was believed by all mankind, yet Pythagoras, who had it with the rest of the world from

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* Των μεν δειλων εις γυναικεα σκανια. Των δε μιαιφονων, εις θηριων σωματα. Λαγνων δε εις συων ἁ καπρων μορφας. Κουφων δε και μετεωρων, εις πτηνων ἀεροπορων, ἀργων δε και ἀπρακτων, ἀμαθων τε και ἀνοητων εις την των ὑνυδρων ἰδεαν. κ. τ. λ. —*Timæus Locrus De Anima Mundi.* See *Dacier, Vie de Pytagoras*, and *Warburton, Div. Leg.*, book iii. sect. 3.

† Ὁς γαρ τα σωματα νοσωδεσι ποκα ὑγιαζομες, εικη μη εικη τοις ὑγιεινοτατοις. Ουτω τας ψυχας ἀπειργομες ψευδεσι λογοις, εικα μη ἀγηται ἀλαθεσι. Λεγοιντο δε ἀναγκαιως και τιμωριαι ξεναι.—*Timæus, ubi supra.*

thence, gave it a new modification; and taught that, "the successive transition of the soul into other bodies, was physical, necessary, and exclusive of all moral considerations whatever." In support of this opinion, the bishop quotes Diogenes Laertius, who says, that "Pythagoras was reported to be the first who taught the migration of the soul from one body to another by a *physical necessity*."*

But the distinction here stated does not appear to be well founded. If the operation of physical necessity in this case be supposed to have superseded *the designation of Providence*, we must admit, as an unavoidable consequence, the prevalence of atheistic principles among the disciples of the Samian philosopher. But as this charge was never urged either against Pythagoras or Plato, and as the former is acknowledged to have received his tenets respecting the soul of man from the priests of Egypt, we should not be justified in attributing to the Grecian schools a creed different from that which their foreign masters communicated to them. There is, in fact, the best reason to believe that the Egyptian hierophants, as well as the Brahmans of the East, maintained originally the doctrine of a direct refusion of the human soul into the essence of the great Parent Spirit; and that, as has been already remarked, the metempsychosis is only to be regarded as a supplementary tenet, devised by the theologue and the lawgiver to strengthen the bands of the social union in their several communities.

Besides, the only physical necessity that can be conceived, as applying to the mystery now under consideration, must have arisen from the leading principle of the doctrine itself; namely, that as every particular soul is a portion of the Eternal Spirit, shut up during the life of the individual

* Πρῶτον δε φασι τουτον ἀποφηναι την ψυχην κυκλυσυ ἀναγκης ἀμειβουσαν, αλλοτε ἀλλοις ἐνδυεσθαι.—*Diog. Laert.* lib. viii. 14.

in a corporeal frame, it must, as soon as it is set free by death, return to its source, and also be absorbed by it, just as a drop of water is absorbed when it falls into the ocean. If this result is to be regarded as the effect of a *physical necessity*, it may be presumed that the views respecting it which are attributed to Pythagoras, did not first suggest themselves to that celebrated philosopher. In truth, they are the very views which must have occurred to the original author of the doctrine; whereas the moral metempsychosis is evidently the fruit of subsequent reflection, and bears upon it the most undeniable tokens of having proceeded from the practical legislator rather than from the speculative philosopher.

I conclude, therefore, that the ancient Egyptians taught in their schools the doctrine of the direct refusion of souls, upon which, for popular purposes, their successors engrafted the additional tenet of transmigration; both of which were at a later period carried into Greece by Pythagoras and other inquirers, who had travelled into the various seats of primæval wisdom, to gratify their curiosity in the search of knowledge and traditionary science.

If the conclusion now drawn be founded upon accurate views of ancient learning, we can be at no loss to discover a better reason why Moses did not introduce into his system of laws the sanction of future rewards and punishments, than that he was desirous to conceal from his people the important doctrine of the immortality of the soul. It will appear that he did not, as has been represented, throw a studied obscurity over every fact which was likely to suggest to the Hebrews the idea of a future state of existence; but rather that he himself did not enjoy such distinct views of the condition of the human soul after death, as were fitted to be made the foundation of a system of moral retribution in a Divine economy.

2*d*, I have said, that the inferences which appear to arise from the personal history of Moses, and, particularly, from the learning in which he was trained among the Egyptians, receive no slight degree of confirmation from the language which is used in the Pentateuch as well as in the writings of the prophets, respecting the state of the dead. An attentive examination of the ancient Scriptures has removed from my mind all doubt that the doctrine of the metempsychosis was at a very early period incorporated into the popular creed of the Hebrews. To illustrate this position it will be necessary to make a few critical remarks on the verbal expressions which are employed by the sacred penman, when describing or alluding to the change which the visitation of mortality effects upon the condition of the human being.

There are two terms used in the Old Testament in reference to the state of man after death, to the precise meaning of which much importance has been attached. The words in question are שאול and קבר *Sheol* and *Keber;* the former of which denotes the *place of departed spirits*, and the latter denotes the *grave*. It is true that Sheol is, in our version of the Bible, commonly translated *hell;* but every reader acquainted with the original languages knows perfectly, that the English term, in its ordinary acceptation, does not express the proper meaning of the Hebrew. The Seventy have almost uniformly rendered Sheol by the Greek word ἅδης, *hades;* a noun which conveys the very same ideas respecting the state of the dead. The Hebrew word occurs sixty times in the Old Testament; in fifty-nine of which it is translated by ἅδης, and in one instance only, by θανατος, *death*. Both sheol and hades suggest to the imagination, the silence, the darkness, and the mysterious dread which are connected with the unseen world; that state about which the most prying eye

and listening ear can obtain no information.* I may add, that *keber* is never in the Greek version rendered by the word *hades;* but always by some term which merely denotes the grave, or the act of burying, or a sepulchre, or a monument. It occurs in the Old Testament seventy-eight times: in forty-one of which it is translated ταφος, a *sepulchre;* in nine, it is rendered ταφη, *burial;* in thirteen, by μνημα, a *tomb* or *grave;* in thirteen, by μνημειον, a *monument;* in one, by ορος, a *mountain;* and, finally, in one, by θανατος, *death.* In not a single instance is ἀδης substituted for קבר; a clear proof that the learned persons who conducted the Septuagint version were well acquainted with the essential distinction between the two Hebrew terms which are at present the subject of remark; and, moreover, that the notions which the Jews entertained of the two states, indicated by these terms, were never confounded either in their thoughts or language.†

I have no intention to conceal that some writers of eminence have maintained that *sheol*, as used in the ancient Scriptures, means nothing more than *keber;* that is,

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* See Campbell's Dissertation on Hades, section 2.

† Dr Campbell, in the Dissertation above-mentioned, observes, "that ἀδης, as well as the corresponding Hebrew word, is always singular in meaning as well as in form. The word for grave is often plural. The former never admits the possessive pronouns, being the receptacle of all the dead, and, therefore, incapable of an appropriation to individuals; the latter often. Where the disposal of the body or corpse is spoken of, ταφος, or some other equivalent term, is the name of its repository. When mention is made of the spirit after death, its abode is ἀδης. When notice is taken of one's making or visiting the grave of any person, touching it, mourning at it, or erecting a pillar or monument upon it, and the like, it is always keber that is employed. Add to this, that in *hades* all the dead are represented as present without exception. The case is quite different with the graves or sepulchres. Thus Isaiah represents, very beautifully and poetically, a great and sudden desolation that would be brought upon the earth, saying (v. 14.) *Hades*, which is, in the common version, *Hell, hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure. Hades* alone is conceived to contain them all, though the graves in which their bodies were deposited might be innumerable."

the grave or a sepulchre. Simon, the learned author of the Critical History of the Old and New Testament, has supported this opinion with his usual ingenuity and erudition; but the arguments of Le Clerc and his associates, of Lowth and Campbell, have supplied the most complete evidence that the prior of Bolleville generalized too freely; and that, in some instances, he gave up to controversy that which he owed to truth.*

To use the words of the last-named theologian, "I freely acknowledge, that by translating sheol *the grave*, the purport of the sentence is often expressed with sufficient clearness. The example from Genesis is an evidence. *Ye will bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave*, undoubtedly gives the meaning of the sentence in the original, notwithstanding that the English word *grave* does not give the meaning of the Hebrew *sheol*. This may at first appear a paradox, but will not be found so when examined. Suppose one, in relating the circumstances of a friend's death, should say, "This unlucky accident has brought him to his shroud;" another should say, "It has brought him to his coffin;" a third, "It brought him to his grave." The same sentiment is expressed by them all; and these plain words, "This accident proved the cause of his death," are equivalent to what was said by every one of them. But is it just to infer thence that the English words, *shroud*, *coffin*, *grave*, and *death*, are synonimous terms? It will not be pretended. Yet I have not heard any argument stronger than this for accounting the Hebrew words *sheol* and *keber* synonimous.†

Having thus cleared the way for a proper understand-

* See Reponse a la Defense des Sentimens de quelques Theologiens de Hollande, chapitre xvi.

† Campbell's Dissertation on Hades, section 4.

ing of the grammatical expression, I have no hesitation in asserting, that wherever in the Old Testament the term שאול is used, it denotes the region of departed spirits; the habitation which they occupy between the hour of death and the period at which they are destined to ascend again to the light of the sun, and to enter upon the functions of life in a new body. It is indeed readily acknowledged, that belief in hades is not necessarily connected with the doctrine of the metempsychosis. But it is not less true, as will be afterwards pointed out, that both among Jews and Heathens, the two tenets usually accompanied each other. Hence all the souls which descended into the lower parts of the earth, except, perhaps, the very good and the very bad, were expected to re-appear in the living world, to suffer or to act according to their several characters. I proceed to illustrate this statement from the writings of Moses and the prophets, as well as from those later compositions which connect the history of the ancient dispensation with that of the new.

The first example of the use of the term sheol is found in the thirty-seventh chapter of the book of Genesis, where Jacob in the paroxysm of his grief for the loss of Joseph, declares that he will go down to the grave to his son mourning. Κατα βησομαι προς τον υιον μου εις ᾅδου; I will go down to my son to hades, according to the Septuagint. The place to which Jacob said he would descend in order to be with his child, could not be the grave in the ordinary sense of the word; because the patriarch believed at the very moment when he uttered this impassioned expression, that the boy Joseph had been devoured by a wild beast, and, consequently, that his body had not received the rites of sepulture.* It is evident, therefore,

* Jacob would go down mourning into *sheol* to his son; not into hell, the

that his hopes or resolutions were directed towards that mysterious dwelling where the spirits of the departed are reserved by the wisdom of the Almighty to answer the ulterior ends of his gracious providence in this world or the next.*

In the sixteenth chapter of Numbers it is declared of those who rose against Moses in the rebellion of Korah, that they should go down quick into the pit. Καταβησονται ζωντες εις ᾅδου; "they shall descend alive into hades:" And, it is added, that the conspirators and all that appertained to them went down alive into sheol, and the earth closed upon them.

The thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy contains

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place of the damned, for he never thought his son to be gone thither, nor into the *grave properly so named*, for he thought his son had been devoured by a wild beast; but into the receptacle of the dead.—*Leigh's Critica Sacra.*

"When the creed affirms that our Saviour *descended into hell*, the meaning thereof is no other than this, viz. that his soul, being separated from the body by a real transitive and local motion, went into the unseen region of spirits, where, according to the laws of death, it remained among other religious and pious departed souls till the resurrection of his body, which was the third day after.

"The ancient sense of the word hell may be farther confirmed from the primary and original signification thereof; according to which it imports no farther than an *invisible and hidden place*, being derived from the old Saxon word hil, which signifies to hide, or from the participle thereof, helled, that is to say, hidden or covered: as in the western parts of England at this very day, to *hele* over any thing, signifies amongst the common people to cover it; and he that covereth an house with tile or slate is called a helliar. From whence it appears that the word hele, according to its primitive notion, exactly answers to the Greek word ᾅδης, Hades, which signifies the common mansion of all separated souls, and was so called *quasi ὁ ἀϊδὴς τοπος*, because it is an unseen place, removed from the sight and view of the living."—*Lord King's Critical History of the Apostle's Creed*, chap. iv. p. 178.

* Vox Græca ᾅδης, cui respondet Hebræa שאול et Latina inferorum (inferi?) denotat illum locum communem, in quem recipiuntur omnes hominum vita functorum animæ. Nunquam vero significat aut sepulcrum aut cælum. Nam qui cælum petunt, ascendere, qui vero ad inferos abeunt, descendere dicuntur; et illi etiam apud inferos esse leguntur, qui neque sepulturæ honore neque cælesti gaudio fruuntur. Dives in parabola apud inferos fuit in tormento, quod nec sepulcro nec cælo convenit. Josephum, quem pater non sepultum sed a feria bestia dilaceratum putavit, tamen dixit esse apud inferos.—*Gen* xxxvii. 35. *Wetstein in Luc.* xvi. 23.

another example of the use of the term sheol, which, by the Seventy, is in like manner translated hades. "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with his increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains." In the Greek version it is said that the fire καυθησεται ἑως ᾅδου, shall burn as far as hades; both the original and the translation proceeding on the idea that sheol was placed at a great distance downwards from the surface of the earth.

In the two latter instances, though the Hebrew and the Greek terms are the same as in the other cases where they are translated *grave*, the authors of the English version thought themselves justified in choosing expressions which should represent what they regarded as the purport of the sacred text, rather than the literal meaning and figurative allusions which the original words convey. A *pit* seemed most suitable for the reception of the murmuring Levites, and hell the most appropriate limit for the devouring fire; and, therefore, the שאול of Moses, and the ᾅδης of the Septuagint, were made to give way to views of philological expediency.

But the affecting appeal used by the mother of Samuel before the ark of God at Shiloh, called for a different form of expression. Κυριος καταγει εἰς ᾅδου και ἀναγει; the Lord bringeth down to hades and bringeth up. In this instance the English translators have preferred the word *grave*; and this, no doubt, is one of the cases in which the purport of the inspired writer may be represented, in a certain way, by any one of the cognate terms by means of which the original phrase is anywhere rendered. Still, it may be doubted whether our common version does give the full and specific meaning of the Hebrew writer; for "to bring down to the grave and bring up again," is an exercise of power, which, though perfectly intelligible,

seems not to amount to the more lofty conception which possessed the mind of the pious Israelite, when she magnified the power of God, who could summon back the soul from the depths of hades.

There is a beautiful passage in the book of Job, the import of which would not permit our translators to have recourse to the humble expression, to which they appear on most occasions to have been ready to give a preference. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know?" In this portion of the sacred text, the Hebrew word is שאול, and the Greek word hades; but as the very same expressions are used in Hannah's prayer, we cannot discover any other reason why *sheol* should be rendered *grave* in the one case, and *hell* in the other, than such as may be supposed to have been derived from the mere compatibility of ideas. The height of heaven required for a contrast the depth of hades; on which account, and on which account only, the English translators thought proper to use the very ambiguous term which at once denotes the place of torment and the place of rest and hope.*

The same remarks apply to the hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm: "If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; if I go down to hades, thou art there also, Εαν καταβω εις τον

* Of the opinion, that the word sheol in the Old Testament always denotes *grave* or *sepulchre*, nothing can be a fuller confutation than this passage. Among such immense distances as the height of heaven, the extent of the earth and the ocean, which were not only in those days unknown to men, but conceived to be unknowable; to introduce as one of the immeasurables, a sepulchre, whose depth could scarcely exceed ten or twelve cubits, and which, being the work of men, was perfectly known, would have been absurd indeed, not to say ridiculous. What man in his senses could have said, "Ye can no more comprehend the Deity than ye can discover the height of the firmament, or *measure the depth of a grave*?"—*Campbell's Dissert.*

ἀδην, παρει." Here, as in the former case, our translators have used the word hell; "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there;" obviously proceeding upon the principle just stated, that the extremes of creation, the heaven above, and the uttermost parts of the sea, could not, in consistency with the commonest literary taste, be contrasted with a cavity in the ground, which, at the most, could not exceed a few yards in dimension.

The celebrated passage in the sixteenth Psalm, which St Peter applied to the resurrection of our Saviour, throws a still clearer light upon the opinions entertained by the ancient Hebrews respecting the condition of the human soul immediately after death. Ὁυκ ἐγκαταλειψεις την ψυχην μου εις ᾅδην, ουδε δωσεις τον ὁσιον σου ἰδειν διαφθοραν. Thou wilt not abandon my soul to hades, nor suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.

That this prediction related to the Messiah, is established upon the most unquestionable grounds; and it held forth the assurance of a fact which was in due time completely realized, that his soul should not be left in the mansion of departed spirits, but should re-animate his body before the latter had suffered corruption. When, therefore, our Redeemer said to the penitent thief upon the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," he distinctly adverted to this great article of our belief; that his soul descended to hades, while his sacred body was committed to the sepulchre.

It is true, as Dr Campbell remarks, that on the subject of a future state, there was a considerable difference in the popular opinions of the Jews when under the Roman government, from those which prevailed amongst them in the days of their Judges and earlier kings. The Heathen had adopted the notion, that the spirits of the departed were susceptible both of enjoyment and of suffer-

ing, and were thereby led to suppose that a species of retribution took place after death, in the world of shadows.* The Jews, without entering into all their notions or confining themselves to their language, insensibly fell into the same train of thinking. The שאול of their prophets was conceived to correspond with the ᾅδης of the Greeks; both of which were imagined to contain habitations for the good as well as for the bad. Rejecting the term *Elysium*, as an unsuitable appellation for the region occupied by virtuous spirits, they took instead of it, as better adapted to their own theology, the *garden of Eden*, or *Paradise*,—a name originally Persian, by which the word answering to garden, especially when applied to Eden, had commonly been rendered by the Seventy interpreters. To denote the same state, they sometimes used the phrase *Abraham's bosom*,—a figure borrowed from the manner in which they reclined at meals.†

In the fourteenth chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah, there is a fine picture presented of that mysterious world, which, according to the doctrine of the ancient Hebrews, was prepared for departed spirits. Foreseeing the death of the king of Babylon, the inspired writer apostrophizes him in these sublime words:—"Sheol from beneath is moved to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath

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* ——Ψυχη δε ποδωκεος Αιακιδαο
Φοιτα, μακρα βιβωσα, κατ' ασφοδελον λειμωνα
Τηθοσυνη, οι υιον εφην αριδικητον ειναι.
Αι δε αλλαι ψυχαι νεκυων κατατεθνειωτων
Εστασαν αχνυμεναι, ειροντο δε κηδε εκαστη.
Hom. Odyss. lib. xi. v. 537.

Και γαρ και αδην δυο τριζους νομιζομεν
Μιαν δικαιων, ισιραν δ' ασεβων ειναι
Οδον, και ει τους δυο καλυψει η γη.
Daphilus apud Clem. Alex. lib. v. strom

† Dr Campbell's Dissertation, section 19.

raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we; art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to hades, and the noise of thy viols; the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground which did weaken the nations! For thou hadst said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will also sit upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to sheol, to the sides of the pit."*

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* The views entertained by Bishop Lowth on this interesting passage do not exactly coincide with those of Dr Campbell and of most other Biblical scholars. "The regions of the dead," says he, "are laid open, and Hades is represented as rousing up the shades of the departed monarchs; they rise from their thrones to meet the king of Babylon at his coming, and insult him on his being reduced to the same low estate of impotence and dissolution with themselves." This is one of the boldest prosopopœias that ever was attempted in poetry, and is executed with astonishing brevity and perspicuity, and with that peculiar force which in a great subject naturally results from both. The image of the state of the dead, or the Infernum Poeticum of the Hebrews, is taken from their custom of burying, those at least of the higher rank, in large sepulchral vaults hewn out in the rock.—You are to form to yourself an idea of a large subterraneous vault, a vast gloomy cavern, all round the sides of which there are cells to receive the dead bodies: here the deceased monarchs lie in a distinguished sort of state suitable to their former rank, each on his own couch, with his arms beside him, his sword at his head, and the bodies of his chiefs and companions round about him. These illustrious shades rise at once from their couches as from their thrones, and advance to the entrance of the cavern to meet the king of Babylon, and to receive him with insults on his fall.—*New trans. of Isaiah, notes on* chap. xiv. *By Robt. Lowth, D. D.*

Were a burial vault a receptacle of souls, and of the souls of all ranks, tribes, and nations, we might conceive it possible that the king of Babylon should be introduced after death to the monarchs of all the earth as well as to the princes of Judah. Were it even supposed that the spirit attended the body to its place of rest, it would not violate the laws of poetical imagination, did an impassioned writer represent the ghost of the Assyrian among the shades of other sovereigns in a sepulchral vault. But the body of that ty-

The dead in the unseen world are represented as being thrown into commotion at the approach of the Babylonish prince. The nobles, even all the chief ones of the earth, were moved to meet him at his coming; all the kings of the nations rose up from their thrones. Such action and demeanour on the part of those potentates assuredly suit not the narrow limits of a sepulchre; even were we at liberty to suppose that all the satraps and sovereigns of the several empires of Asia could have been consigned to one tomb. In Hades, all the monarchs and nobles, not of one family or race, but of the whole earth, are assembled. Yet their sepulchres were as distant from one another as the nations they governed. Those mighty dead, again, are raised not from their couches, which would have been the natural expression, had the prophet's idea been that of a sepulchral vault, how magnificent soever, but from their thrones, as suited the notion of all antiquity, concerning not the bodies but the shades or ghosts of the departed, to which was always assigned something similar in rank and occupation to what they had possessed upon the earth. Nay, as is well observed by Castalio, some individuals are represented as being in hades, whose carcasses were denied the honours of sepulture.*

But it is not necessary to adduce from sacred Scripture any farther proof that the *sheol* of the Hebrews, like the *hades* of the Greeks, denoted the place whereunto all separated souls, whether good or bad, were translated and

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rant was not honoured with the decencies of burial; for it is mentioned to his disgrace, that, while "all the kings of the nations, even all of them lie in glory, every one in his own house," he was to be cast out of his grave as an abominable branch, and "not to be joined with them in burial." The Hades, therefore, which was stirred up to meet the king of Babylon, was not a sepulchral vault, but the place of departed spirits to which the good and the bad alike descended.

* See Campbell's Dissertation, and Castalionis Defensio adversus Bezam.

carried, and there disposed of into two distinct mansions.* To use the words of a writer very learned in the antiquities of the East, I may venture to assert, that "amongst all the ancients, whether Heathens, Jews, or Christians, the usual acceptation of the term hell (*hades*) was, that it was the common lodge or habitation of departed souls, both good and bad, wherein each of them, according to their deserts in this life, and their expectations of the future judgment, remained either in joy or misery. That the Heathens, both Greeks and Latins, the one by their *hades*, and the other by their *inferi*, did generally understand the fore-mentioned place of departed souls, needs no large or copious proof, seeing the least peruser of their writings must without doubt have observed this to have been their general opinion, that as upon the death of all men, whether just or unjust, the grave received their bodies, so hell received their souls. But from the Heathen let us come unto the Jews, amongst whom we shall find the same sentiment to have prevailed."†

St Ambrose was fully satisfied that the doctrine of an intermediate state had its origin among the Hebrews; and was, on this account, highly incensed at the Pagans, who, when they chose to borrow it from the people of God, were not content with the simple truth, but insisted upon adding to it their own foolish superstitions and unprofitable conceits. "Let the Gentiles know," exclaimed the pious father, "that the things which they admire in their books of philosophy were taken from our Scriptures, and I could wish

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* Hic locus est, partis ubi se via findit in ambas :
Dextera, quæ Ditis magni sub mœnia tendit,
Hac iter Elysium nobis ; at læva malorum
Exercet pœnas, et ad impia Tartara mittit.—*Virgil*, lib. vi.

Ἐνθ' ἦτοι Μίνωα ἴδον Διος ἀτλαον υἱον
Χρυσειον σκῆπτρον ἐχοντα θεμιστευοντα νεκυεσσιν.—*Odyss.* xi. vers. 567, &c.

† Lord King's History of the Apostles' Creed, chap. iv.

they had not mixed up with them their own superfluous and useless speculations, but remained satisfied with this unambiguous assurance, that the souls of men when delivered from the body go to *hades*,—that invisible region to which, in the Latin language, we have given the name infernus."*

The opinion of Ambrose was not singular in regard to the obligations which the Heathen bore to the Jews for their knowledge of the tenet in question. All the early fathers of the church believed that the doctrine of a middle state was derived in the remotest antiquity from the prophets of Israel. Josephus, too, when giving an account of the Sadducean faith, reproaches that sect for denying the existence of soul and spirit, and for thereby removing the salutary belief of future reward and punishment in hades. The Pharisees, on the other hand, are extolled for teaching the immortality of the soul, and for confirming by that doctrine the expectation natural to man, that the spirits of the departed receive, in a mansion under the earth, a full requital of enjoyment or of misery, according to the nature of their pursuits and dispositions while in the land of the living.†

I have hitherto taken no notice of the argument for the

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* Cognoscant Gentiles ea quæ in philosophiæ libris mirantur, translata de nostris, atque utinam non superflua his et inutilia miscuissent; satisfuerat dixisse illis quod liberatæ animæ de corporibus ἀϊδην peterent, id est, locum qui non videtur, quem locum latine infernum dicimus.—*De bono Mortis*, c. 10.

The following extract is from the work of a Pagan freethinker on this subject:—Ὁ μεν δι πολυς ὅμιλος, ὁυς ιδιωτας ὁι σοφοι καλουσιν Ὁμηρον τι και Ησιοδον, και τοις αλλοις μυθοποιοις περι ταυτων πιθομενοι—τοπον τινα ὑπο τη γη βαθυν ᾅδην ὑπειληφασι, μιγαν δι και πολυχωρον τουτον ἰναι και ζοφιρον και ἀηλιον—τους μεν ἀγαθους των ἀνδρων και δικαιους—ἐπιδαν συναλισθωσι, καθαπιρ ἰς ἀποικιαν τινα πεμπουσι ἰις τον Ἠλυσιον πιδιον—αν δι τινας των πονηρων λαβωσι, ἐς τον ζνν ἀσιβων χωρον ἰκπιμπουσι κολασθησαμινους.—*Lucian de Luctu.*

† Ψυχης τι την διαμονην, και τας καθ' ᾅδου τιμωριας και τιμας ἀναιρουσι.—*Bell. Jud.* ii. 8. 14.

Ἀθανατον τι ἰσχυν τοις ψυχαις πιστις ἀυτοις ἰναι και ὑπο χθονος δικαιωσιις τι και τιμας οις ἀριτης ἡ κακιας ἐπιστηδυσις ἐν τω βιω γιγονι.—*Antiq. Jud.* xviii. 3.

separate existence of the soul, which may be derived from the practice of necromancy among the ancient Hebrews. So early as the days of their inspired lawgiver, it was deemed necessary to threaten with the severest punishment, all who should betake themselves to the consultation of the spirits in sheol. "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer,"—that is, *one who consulteth the dead.*

The story of the witch of Endor supplies a similar species of evidence; leaving not the smallest room for doubt, not only that the existence of the soul after death was, in the earliest times, an article of popular belief, but also that it was thought possible, by means of certain arts, to draw forth the spirits of the departed to the light of the sun, and to gain from them the most important information concerning the future. The fraud which was sometimes practised by the enchanters does not at all weaken the force of the argument, as referable to the secret creed of the Hebrew people: for that they believed in a state, where the thinking principle exercised certain of its powers without the instrumentality of the body, is proved even more convincingly by the very grossness and absurdity of the superstition which they employed in their divinations.*

Justin Martyr, some of whose observations on the occurrence at Endor are marked with the credulity which belonged to his age, nevertheless applies the fact, in whatever sense it is to be understood, to confirm the doctrine of the soul's

* Bishop Patrick with great simplicity remarks, on the appearance of Samuel at Endor, that it could not be real, because the "text speaks of bringing him *up*, and of his *coming up* out of the earth; whence, if it had been Samuel, he should rather have come down from heaven.—*Com. in loc.*

immortality. Νεκυομαντειαι μεν γαρ και αι αδιαφθορων παιδων ἐποπτευσεις, και ψυχων ἀνθρωπινων κλησεις και οἱ λεγομενοι παρα τοις μαγοις ὀνειροπομπαι, και παρεδροι, και τα γενομενα ὑπο των ταυτα εἰδοτων, πεισατωσαν ὑμας ὁτι και μετα θανατον ἐν αἰσθησει εἰσιν αἱ ψυχαι.*

But the question with which we are mainly concerned is to determine how far the doctrine of an intermediate state, and the belief that rewards and punishments were awarded in *sheol*, was connected with the tenet of the metempsychosis.

That the connection now mentioned did subsist wherever the former tenet was professed among Gentile nations, might be easily established from their history whether in the East or the West; and that it was recognized likewise among the ancient Hebrews, becomes extremely probable, both from the nature of the thing itself, and from the opinions which they are known to have entertained on this subject at a later period. After the captivity, the doctrine of the transmigration of souls is openly avowed. In the apocryphal book entitled the Wisdom of Solomon, the author says of himself, that *being a witty child, and having a good spirit, or rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled.*† The same doctrine appears to be alluded to in the second book of Esdras, where the angel replies to the inquisitive sage in the following terms:—"And he said unto me, In the grave (ἁδης) the chambers of souls are like the womb of a woman: for like as a woman that travaileth maketh haste to escape the necessity of the travail, even so do these places haste to deliver those things that are committed unto them."‡

In the time of our Saviour, the popular voice as well as

* Justin, Apol. 1. c. xxiv. † Wisdom of Solomon, chap. viii. 19, 20. ‡ 2 Esdras iv. 40, 41.

the profounder doctrines of the Pharisaical schools, spoke with one accord the language of the metempsychosis. The Redeemer was thought to be Elias, or Jeremiah, or some other of the ancient prophets. The man, too, who was born blind was supposed to have provoked the indignation of heaven when existing in a former state, and to have been afflicted with the privation of sight as a penance for crimes which had stained a prior life.* All the expectations of the Messiah, indeed, had a reference more or less immediate to the doctrine of the metempsychosis. His forerunner was to appear animated with the soul of one of the most distinguished of the prophetical order;† and the spirit which was to direct the power and benevolence of the Divine nature in his own person, was understood to be one, which, under a less exalted name, had discharged the offices of humanity to a remote generation of his people.

But even with these strong facts in support of the hypothesis which I am now endeavouring to establish, I cannot conceal, that, during the long period which elapsed between the decease of Moses and the fall of the Hebrew kingdoms, there is a great want, in Jewish history, of didactic works in all the departments of merely human learning; and, of consequence, a considerable difficulty in arriving at a satisfactory conclusion, relative to the philosophical and religious opinions, which, at any point of the interval just mentioned, possessed the belief of the Israelitish schools.

Since the revival of learning in modern Europe, a good deal of discussion has taken place among divines, in re-

* St John, chap. ix. 2.

† It is remarkable that this prophet, who was expected to re-appear in the days of redemption, was regarded by the Jews of old as one of the least popular of his body.

gard as well to the antiquity as to the exact import of the metempsychosis which was held by the Pharisees. That the doctrines of this celebrated Jewish sect on the condition of the soul after death were the very same which were taught by Pythagoras, has been maintained with much force of reasoning by Scultetus, Gerard John Vossius, and Paul Slevogtus.* The arguments of these able writers have had to sustain the learned opposition of Camero, in his prelections on the gospel of St Matthew, and of John Maldonatus, in his Commentaries on the same inspired book: both of whom assert, that the notions of the Pharisees exhibited many points of difference when compared with the dogmas of ancient Egypt, and the tenets of the Pythagorean and Platonic schools.

Josephus, they allege, did not attribute to the Pharisaical teachers the same opinion which is elsewhere ascribed to Pythagoras, but another which was held by all the Jews; namely, that only the souls of the good undergo a modified metempsychosis by returning into their own bodies, which, from being made more pure and perfect than they formerly were, are figuratively denominated *other bodies*. The phrase ἑτερον σωμα, say they, does not denote that the body is different in matter and substance, but only different in its qualities; on the same principle, that, in the gospel of St Luke, the fashion of our Saviour's countenance is said to have been altered: το ειδος του προσωπου αυτου ἑτερον.†

* The first in his Exercit. Evang. lib. 11; the second in his Orig. et Progress. Idolatriæ; and the third in the Disput. De Metempsychosi Judæorum, apud Ugolini, vol. xxii.

† Nam Josephus, sicut illi arbitrantur, non eam Pharisæis opinionem tribuit quam Pythagoræ alioquin ascribunt; sed quam habent alii quoque Judæi, non omnium mortuorum, sed bonorum tantum animas, in sua quidem, ut meliora et ideo quodam modo alia corpora, ut ita ἑτερον σωμα non notet diversum corpus materia et substantia, sed diversum qualitate: quomodo fere, Luke ix. 29, ειδος, hoc est species vultus Christi, dum transfiguraretur, dicitur γενεσθαι ἑτερον.—*Slevogtus, Disput. De Metem. Jud.*

The distinction here stated, which Dr Campbell unwittingly ascribes to the author of the Jewish Antiquities,* will be found upon inquiry to have no foundation. Εἶδος is no more than the appearance. Now, to say that the body into which the soul passes is another body, and to say that it has another appearance, are two expressions which no person who reflects will confound as equivalent. That there are some things, however, which would lead us to infer that the opinions of the later Pharisees on this article were more conformable to the Christian doctrine than is implied in the words of Josephus, is not to be dissembled. But the difficulty connected with this point is more easily removed by admitting, what is far from being improbable, that there was not then among them an exact uniformity of opinion, than by recurring on either side to a mode of criticism which the language will not bear.†

Besides, the argument of Camero, if carried its full length, will go to prove that the resurrection itself must be confined to the good, and thereby contradict the apostolical declaration, that both the just and the unjust are to arise from the grave, and to appear before the judgment seat of God. It is, therefore, certain, that the opinion which Josephus ascribes to the Pharisees was the proper metempsychosis,—the migration of the soul into a different body. The Rabbi, David Kimchi, assures us that it was the doctrine of the ancient sages, that every living thing, after it has died, shall rise again; because it is ordained that souls must go round as it were in a circle of existence, and return at length into the world. But they do not return to the first matter, as that very matter is in itself: and the greatest of the philosophers teach, though this

* Dr Jennings. † Dissertation on Hades and Gehenna.

periodical change is to continue during some thousands of years, that the soul is not to return into a body eternally.*

We have a similar testimony from Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel, who asserts that the opinion concerning the transmigration of souls was universally held among the disciples of the Cabala. He gives a quotation from the book called *Sohar*, the most ancient composition, next to the Targum, that is possessed by the Jews; wherein the Supreme Being is described as listening to the complaints of certain souls which had just escaped from the body, respecting the taint and contamination which they had contracted from their union with matter, and as granting to them severally permission to migrate into other bodies, wherein they might atone for the faults committed in the earthly tabernacles which they had formerly inhabited.†

That the doctrine in question was cherished by the Jewish teachers at an early period is sufficiently well established; but whether they brought the dogma with them from Egypt, or received it at a later epoch through the medium of the Greek philosophy, is a point which cannot be so satisfactorily determined. It is the opinion of Vossius, as well as of Slevogtus, that belief in the metempsychosis had obtained a footing among the Hebrews and Chaldeans long before the time of Pythagoras; and even that this distinguished philosopher was initiated in the mysteries which respect the eternity of the soul, either

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* Apud Slevogtum. Disp. de Met. Jud.

† Testatur R. Menassah ben Israel, in libro 2do, cap. 18, De Resurrectione; qui opinionem de transmigratione animorum dicit fuisse Cabalistarum celebrem et decantatam. Probat ex libro *Sohar*, Judæis post Targum antiquissimo, et diu ante Talmud, scripto. Ibi enim Deus animabus, omnem culpam a se transferentibus in sua corpora, et una conquerente quod in biliosum, altera quod in phlegmaticum, alia quod in sanguineum, unde suam labem contraxerint, immissæ essent, potestatem dedit migrandi in alia, ad luendam culpam in prioribus contractam.—*Slevogtus, De Metem, Jud.*

by the disciples of Moses, or by the sages of the East. An autem error ille a Judæis primum ad Pythagoram manârit, an a Pythagora ad Judæos, definiat qui potest: fortasse Pythagoras a Chaldæis et Hebræis in hunc errorem pertractus. Whether this error (the metempsychosis) was derived by Pythagoras from the Jews, or adopted by the Jews from Pythagoras, let him determine who can. Perhaps Pythagoras was drawn into it by the Chaldeans and Hebrews.*

That the Israelites, even in the time of their divine lawgiver, held the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, I am disposed to conclude from the following considerations:

First, Because at that period they certainly believed that the spiritual part of man has after death a separate and distinct existence independently of the body,—a tenet which is proved and illustrated by the Mosaical law against necromancy, or the practice of consulting departed spirits. Now, as this belief in the separate existence of the soul was everywhere else accompanied by the doctrine of the metempsychosis, it may justly be inferred that the creed of the Hebrews on this head coincided with those of all other nations in similar circumstances.

Secondly, We find that at the earliest period whence any authentic information has reached us respecting the religious tenets of the Hebrew philosophers, or of the

* Imo non animas modo superesse post mortem, consensus gentium fuit; sed apud multas etiam reliquiæ fuere de nova cum corporibus conjunctione, quam resurrectionem dicimus. Sed fœde corruperunt in illam quam dixere μετεμψυχωσιν, quasi dicas *transanimationem*, item μετενσωματωσιν, hoc est *migrationem de corpore in corpus*; etiam παλιγγενεσιαν, sive *regenerationem*. Quæ non Pythagoreorum duntaxat, sed multarum etiam gentium opinio fuit, et admodum dissitarum. De Ægyptiis, testis Herodotus; a quibus etiam id hausisse Pythagoram, idem tradit. De Judæis Talmudistis idem liquet ex Thalmud ordine iv. tractatu ii. Sed magis mirandum quod Pharisæis quoque hoc placuit.—*Ger. Joan. Vossius, De Idolatria Gentili*, p. 27. *Edit. Amstelodam.* MDCC.

several sects into which the interpreters of the Pentateuch were divided, the great body of the Jews believed in transmigration; whence we may conclude, that this dogma was held in times still prior to those of which profane history has preserved an account, and was in fact transmitted through all the generations which passed between Moses and Ezra. From the Captivity downwards, the metempsychosis was unquestionably a part of the popular creed. We discover traces of it in most of the apocryphal writings; and, at the era of the gospel, it served as the basis of nearly all the doctrines and the hopes, which, at that remarkable period, divided the Jewish nation. When the disciples were asked by their Master, "Whom do men say that I am?" they immediately answered him in the spirit of this ancient dogma, that "some say thou art John the baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets."*

Thirdly, that the tenet of transmigration had already entered into the general doctrine of the eternal and independent existence of the soul, I conclude, from the remarkable fact, that, though the immortality of the thinking principle was acknowledged by the Egyptians, the Hebrew legislator, who was well acquainted with their creed, did not venture to introduce upon such a foundation the sanction of future reward and punishment into his system of divine laws.

To remove the appearance of paradox which may seem to attach to this statement, let us call to mind that the metempsychosis has always been represented as a device of the magistrate or of the theologian, to secure, on the ground of human responsibility, the great interests of society. It was, according to the figurative language of Timæus,

* Matthew xvi. 13, 14.

an attempt to cure a dangerous disease with a poisonous drug; and it proceeded upon the resolution to employ falsehood where the power of truth had been found to prove unavailing.* But the divine authority upon which Moses acted permitted not the use of such questionable means even to promote a good end; and as the fulness of time had not yet arrived, when life and immortality were to be fully brought to light, the defects of revelation were in the interval supplied by the visible administration of a special Providence.

Instead, therefore, of following the scheme of Warburton, which, on this particular topic, is unquestionably exposed to many objections, it appears to me that there is good reason to believe, not only that Moses was unacquainted with the proper doctrine of the immortality of the soul; but, moreover, that it was not intended by Divine Wisdom that he should reveal those clearer and more perfect views respecting a future state, which were obviously reserved for a later period, as being closely connected with the dispensation of the Gospel. No theological hypothesis, indeed, could be less in harmony with our usual conceptions of the character and government of the Almighty, than one founded on the assumption that he commanded his inspired servant to conceal from the chosen people an article of faith so extremely important. We can hardly allow ourselves to imagine that Moses would be disposed, and far less that he should be authorised by the omniscient Governor of the world, to withhold from the tribes of Israel the valuable knowledge, not only that the soul of man is imperishable and must exist for ever; but also that death does not affect the personal identity of the human being, nor weaken the responsibility which attaches to

* See page 314, as above.

him as a moral and accountable agent. I say, it is very difficult, and even somewhat unreasonable, to suppose that the lawgiver of the Hebrews knew these truths, and that he cautiously and guardedly concealed them—that he hurried over the narrative of Enoch's translation in such a manner that his readers might not find in it any hint or ground for conjecture, relative to the separate state of the soul in the unseen world.*

Nor does there appear to be any just ground for retorting upon me the objection which may seem to arise from the fact, which is, indeed, nowhere denied, that the doctrine of immortality and of future reward and punishment was not at all revealed in the Mosaical economy: For, while it is perfectly consistent with the procedure of the Divine government to make known the great truths of religion, gradually and from time to time, according to the changing circumstances of the human race, we find no authority, in the records either of Providence or of revelation, for admitting the belief that an inspired person was commanded to keep back, from the very people whom he was commissioned to teach, a knowledge of heavenly things which he himself possessed, and which was, at the same time, infinitely more important than any which he did actually communicate to them.

* It is perhaps not unworthy of remark, that the Jews, even in the time of our Saviour, had not attained to correct views on the immortality of the soul as connected with personal identity and a general resurrection. The Pharisees, indeed, professed to believe both that there is to be a resurrection, and also that there are angels and spirits. "But, according to Josephus,' this resurrection of their's was no more than a Pythagorean resurrection, that is, a resurrection of the soul only by its transmigration into another body, and being born anew with it. But from this resurrection they excluded all who were notoriously wicked. For of such their notion was, that their souls, as soon as separated from their bodies, were transmitted into a state of everlasting woe, there to suffer the punishment of their sins to all eternity. But as to lesser crimes, their opinion was, that they were punished in the bodies, which the souls of those who committed them were next sent into. And ac-

We find not in the writings of Moses a single distinct statement or exposition respecting the doctrines of the Trinity, of the atonement, or of future reward and punishment; and he who might happen to have read no more of the Scriptures than is contained in the Pentateuch, must have for ever remained a stranger to these sublime truths. Whether the son of Amram himself had any knowledge of them, it would be presumptuous to determine; but I should not depart from the judgment of the most learned divines, were I to assert, that Moses was not the only one of the prophets who is supposed to have uttered predictions without being aware of their precise import; and even to have used descriptive expressions without foreseeing their ultimate and specific application. It is the opinion of the greater number of theological writers, that most of the references to Christianity contained in the Old Testament, had a primary as well as a secondary meaning; a literal subject and a figurative; an historical import and a prophetic one: and it is certainly not inconsistent with the great purposes to which the supernatural endowments of the in-

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cording to this notion was it that Christ's disciples asked him, in the case of the man that was born blind, *Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?* For this plainly supposeth an antecedent state of being, otherwise it cannot be conceived that a man could sin before he was born. And when the disciples told Christ that some said of him that he was Elias, and others Jeremias or one of the prophets; this can be understood no otherwise, but that they thought, according to the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, that he was come into the world with the soul of Elias, or of Jeremias, or of some other of the old prophets transmitted into him and born with him. These two instances, put together, plainly prove what Josephus saith, that is, that the resurrection held by the Jews, in those times, was no other than a Pythagorean resurrection of the same soul in another body. But when Christ came, who brought life and immortality to light, he first taught the true resurrection of the same body and soul together, and soon after the Jews learned it from his followers, and ever since have taught it in the same manner as they did. For all their books, now extant, speak of the resurrection of the dead, and the last judgment thereon to follow, no otherwise, in the main particulars, than as the Christians do."—*Prideaux, Connection of Old and New Testament*, part II. book v. sect. 4.

spired penmen were rendered subservient, to suppose that, on all occasions, the double sense of their words was not present to their minds. For the same reason, I can see no serious objection to the conclusion, that the predictions in the Pentateuch, applicable to the kingdom of the Messiah, might not be fully comprehended by him who recorded them: in short, that he had not the same clear views of the doctrines and institutions of Christianity which were revealed in after times to the apostles and evangelists; but that he used types of which others were to explain the correspondence, and shadowed forth a scheme of divine truth which it was reserved for a more enlightened season to expound and enforce.

At all events, we have only the alternative of *ignorance* or of studied *concealment* on the part of Moses, relative to the great doctrine of immortality as connected with future rewards and punishment; and in such a case, though opposed by the powerful authority of Warburton, I have no hesitation in preferring the former. To accomplish the ends of his moral government upon earth, the Almighty has always employed such human means and agents as naturally belonged to the successive times and states of society which have diversified the history of man; and if it pleased not the Divine Wisdom to remove from his chosen servant the "slowness of speech," which the latter viewed as a disqualification for his great office, but substituted the eloquence of Aaron to supply the defect, we may conclude, that in other respects no miraculous change was wrought upon the mind or person of Moses.* The only knowledge which this divine legate possessed was de-

* Exodus iv. 10—17. And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well, and he shall be thy spokesman unto the people.

rived from the schools of Egypt. The priests of Memphis and of On had, no doubt, taught him, as they are supposed to have taught all others who were allowed to share in their wisdom, that the soul of man being a part of the great soul of the world, returned at death into the source whence it sprang; or if they had already engrafted upon their general doctrine the supplementary tenet of the metempsychosis, and admitted him to the profounder views of their sacred mysteries, he must have known that the popular opinion regarding the return of departed spirits in new bodies to undergo penance upon earth, was a mere accommodation of the abstract truth for practical purposes, and was not seriously held by the master philosophers who are said to have recommended it.

Moses was selected by the Almighty to fulfil his ministry of grace towards the afflicted Israelites, with such mental acquirements and bodily qualities as the young Hebrew happened to possess; and as his defects in utterance were supplied by the ready tongue of his brother Aaron, so his want of knowledge respecting the true nature of the soul, and the doctrince of future reward and punishment, was amply compensated by the unceasing and minute retributions of a special Providence. In a word, Moses did not avail himself as a lawgiver of the hopes and fears which respect eternity, because he was ignorant of the only foundation on which these sentiments could be made to rest—the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body; and not because he was disposed or commanded to conceal from the people of Israel those most powerful of all motives to virtue and godliness of living.

We shall, on this ground, have less difficulty in explaining the briefness of the narrative in which the inspired historian sets forth the translation of Enoch. Of this holy patriarch, Moses says no more, than that "he walked with

God; and was not; for God took him,"—a notice which, if read by itself, and examined without the aid of an authoritative exposition, would not certainly throw any light upon the opinions of the writer in reference to the state of man after death.* Had not the epistle to the Hebrews led us to the right meaning of this ancient text, we should not have found it easy to determine whether Moses intended to inform the reader of any fact more important than that Enoch was taken away at an early age; and that, because the demise of the good man was not in the ordinary course of nature, he ascribed it to a particular interposition of Divine Providence. He died, not like his fathers, in the fulness of years; but God removed him before the natural period had elapsed. Taking the narrative by itself, I repeat, we should not have discovered in it any materials for an argument in support of the position which is sometimes founded upon it, namely, that the legislator of the Hebrews was acquainted with the true doctrine of immortality as connected with the expectation of future rewards and punishments.

III. But, leaving all farther consideration of the religious belief of the ancient Hebrews, we now proceed to the interesting inquiry which is allotted for the third section of this chapter; namely, to examine into the history and object of the idolatrous practices of the same people prior to their captivity in Babylon.

It cannot have escaped the most careless reader, that, though the belief and worship of ONE GOD, the maker and governor of the world, was the fundamental principle of the Mosaical religion, and, in fact, the main object for which the children of Israel were separated from all the other nations of the earth, yet a tendency to idolatry ma-

* Genesis v. 24.

nifested itself among the Hebrew people, from the day they left Egypt until they were subdued by the arms of Nebuchadnezzar. Surrounded by tribes who were addicted to the practices of polytheism, the Israelites could not resist the contagion; but, rejecting at once the dictates of common sense and the authority of their divine lawgiver, they extended their faith and adoration to figures of wood and stone, and lifted up their eyes to worship the host of heaven.

Certain opinions, as Michaelis remarks, are at certain times infectious; and we ourselves, even now, would perhaps, with equal folly, feel the like propensity to superstition, if we formed but a small nation in the midst of a whole world of idolators. We see that neither the very judicious and rigorous laws of Moses, nor yet all the miracles performed by the power of the only true God, were sufficient, though the people admitted their historical truth, to overcome this strange infatuation, until a certain revolution took place in the state of human thought and manners. Even Solomon, the wisest of the Israelitish monarchs, and who is extolled to us as a learned man and a philosopher, was afflicted with a frenzy from which the very weakest of mortals can now easily preserve himself; and, incredible as it may appear, gave way to the prevailing propensity, and fell into the rankest and most contemptible superstition.

Nor did this mental disease lose aught of its power over mankind until the period when Cyrus extended his dominion over the whole of Western Asia. The Persians, it is well known, were enemies to idol-worship. They believed in but one invisible God, of whom fire was esteemed the most appropriate image; for the Evil principle, according to their doctrine, was to exist but during a limited time, after which benevolence and peace were to reign

throughout all creation, both material and immaterial. This similarity of creed produced a friendly sentiment towards the Jews; nor did it cost Cyrus any struggle with his religious principles to acknowledge, by a public ediet, that Jehovah was the God of heaven; who, by the mouth of his prophet, had foretold his coming; had aided him in his numerous victories; and of whose gift alone were all the kingdoms which he had conquered.*

The worship of one God had no longer to struggle, as before, with the practice and opinions of mankind; and from this time, we find the Jews such zealous worshippers of Jehovah, that the Greeks could not, even by the fiercest persecutions, cause them to abandon the religion of their prophets; whereas, among their forefathers, even the severest punishments were not always able to preserve it.†

There seems, indeed, to be a period in the history of human society at which it is almost impossible to wean the mind from idolatrous usages. The first men, as Diodorus Siculus observes in regard to the Egyptians, struck with the beauty and majesty of the heavens, were impelled by strong and not very unnatural feelings to regard the sun, moon, and stars as the peculiar abode of the spirits which rule the world; and hence to direct to those parts of creation the worship and gratitude which are due to the Great First Cause.‡ The sun and the moon were next venerat-

* Now, in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord, spoken by Jeremiah, might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me, and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah: who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.—2 *Chronicles*, xxxvi. 22, 23.

† Michaelis' Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, *Article* 32.

‡ Τους δ' ουν κατα Αιγυπτον ανθρωπους, το παλαιον γενομενους, αναβλεψαντας εις τον κοσμον και την των ολων φυσιν κατανοησαντας και θαυμασαντας, υπολαβειν ειναι δυο θεους αϊδιους τε και πρωτους, τον τε ηλιον και την σεληνην.—*Dio. Sic.* i. 11.

ed, not as the residences of the immortal gods, but as the gods themselves; the lively imaginations of the East attributing to those bright emblems of divine power the intelligence and design which belong to the uncreated Mind. This appears to have been the first form of worship in the primæval world, after the light of revealed truth had gradually become obscured or forgotten.

In process of time, a second occasion of false worship arose to extend the reign of superstition, and at once to debase and to multiply its objects. When a great man appeared, to whose valour or ingenuity the people were indebted for peace and an addition to their enjoyments, their gratitude would induce them to confer upon him the name of a god; for, in the infancy of language, it is more usual to employ a metaphor than to find suitable terms for separate qualities. The brave man is called a lion, and the fierce one a tyger or a dog, before the analytical process has been so far completed as to supply the notions of courage and of cruelty in the abstract: and for the same reason, a beneficent individual, who had devoted all his cares, and perhaps his life itself, to promote the security and comfort of his tribe, would be rewarded with the name of a divinity. His memory would be cherished and his virtues perpetuated; and as his person was already associated in their imaginations with the title and qualities of a celestial being, their commemorations of his good works would at no distant period assume the form of divine homage.

Hence the origin of what has been called hero-worship, and the consequent confusion of terrestrial and heavenly gods. Not only were the names the same and the worship similar; but we find, that, in different countries, and at successive periods, the human divinities have been more than once repeated. Almost every nation has had a Hercules to engage its wonder and credulity. Bacchus, the conqueror and

the vine-dresser, has been praised in every land from the Indus to the Tiber; and his joyous festivals called forth the songs and triumph of barbarians in Europe, as well as in Asia, for a hundred generations. The other gods have been multiplied in like manner; and it was soon found that the heavenly host could not supply distinctive appellations to the kings, the commanders, and the sages, whom the gratitude of unenlightened times endeavoured to raise to the rank of immortals.

The two descriptions of worship now mentioned reciprocally extended each other's boundaries; for the hero came to be adored for the sake of the star, and the star for the sake of the hero. The host of heaven, which at first, by their magnificence and glory, drew from the heart of man a spontaneous worship, was afterwards honoured in conjunction with human beings to whom their names had been transferred; and this is the reason why it is so difficult to draw a line, in the works of ancient authors, between Sabaism and the worship of deified mortals.

But the substitution of *emblems* for the direct homage of the gods was the most fruitful source of idolatry properly so called. It was this device which filled the temples of Egypt with their countless absurdities, and surrounded the altars of every land with figures of wood and stone; and it is the same questionable expedient for fixing the attention, or for exciting the devotional feelings of the ignorant, which first introduced into Christian assemblies the images of saints and martyrs. But as it is not my object to trace the rise and progress of idolatry among heathen nations in general, I shall not pursue those inquiries at greater length.

In regard to the Hebrews, with whose opinions on this subject we are more immediately concerned, it may be observed, that they made a distinction between worshipping

strange gods and paying their adoration to Jehovah through the medium of idolatrous emblems. For example, they allowed it to be quite inconsistent with the fundamental principles of their religious polity to offer sacrifice to Baal or Moloch; but they did not imagine it could be wrong to serve the true God by setting up calves to represent the Divine Nature, or by forming images to decorate their high places and consecrated groves. When Jeroboam had resolved on a permanent separation of the ten tribes which had revolted from the son of Solomon, "he took counsel and made two calves of gold, and said unto his people, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan."*

Nor did the subjects of this impious monarch refuse to listen to his advice; but, believing that their worship was acceptable to the God who had led their fathers through the wilderness, they yielded themselves up to the superstitious practices which their crafty leader invited them to follow. Nay, it is farther remarkable, that in the reformations which were adopted by the good kings who succeeded to the throne both in Israel and Judah, the calves, the images, and the high places, were not removed. Of Jehoash, for instance, it is said, "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him; but the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places."† The same remark is made respecting Amaziah, Azariah, and Pekah; and it was not till the reign of the zealous Hezekiah, that those instruments of idolatry were completely demolished. "He did that which was right

* 1 Kings xii. 28, 29. † 2 Kings xii. 2, 3.

in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did. He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense unto it."*

But this reformation was not lasting. The mass of the people were strongly inclined to their ancient superstitions, and appear to have followed very willingly the footsteps of Manasseh, who built up again the high places which his father had destroyed; and reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven and served them. He made his son to pass through the fire, and used enchantments and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards; and he set up a graven image of the grove in the house of the Lord.† It was not till the accession of the holy Josiah, that the public mind was prepared for breaking down the ancient monuments of idolatry, and particularly the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.‡

So infectious was the worship of idols, that even the people of Judah appear to have followed the example of the revolted tribes, and to have gone up to the altar at Bethel. But the distinction mentioned above, respecting the service of strange gods, and the idolatrous reverence which was offered up to Jehovah, is most strikingly illustrated by the usages of the other kingdom, and particularly of Jehu, the usurper of its throne. Having by means of a stratagem, which sober reason hesitates to approve, cut off the priests of Baal, and having burned the images of that god, and broken down his house, and finally destroyed Baal out of Israel, he continued, not-

* 2 Kings xviii. 3, 4. † 2 Kings xxi. 3—7. ‡ 2 Kings xxiii. 15.

withstanding, to permit the worship of the idol-calves which the first of his predecessors had consecrated. "Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not; *to wit*, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan.* His zeal for Jehovah, of which he thought it not unbecoming to boast, did not carry him so far as to destroy the favourite emblems under which the people delighted to recognize the protection and beneficence of the Divinity; and, therefore, while he rooted out Baal from the land, he left untouched the groves, and the high places, and the four-footed idols of the son of Nebat.

But, in vindication of this ambitious monarch, it may be right to add, that the greater number of commentators on this portion of Scripture allow that the worship of the calves was not strictly unlawful. It is admitted on all hands, that they were consecrated to the true God, and even that the service performed in their presence was not viewed by the prophets as absolute idolatry. These holy men appear to have regarded the device of Jeroboam as amounting only to an act of schism, which was indeed very criminal; but not as involving the ten tribes in a total apostacy from the religion of their fathers. It has been well remarked, that the new king is not introduced, in the sacred narrative, speaking like a person whose intention it was to make an innovation upon the national faith; but merely as representing to his people, that, as the true God was everywhere present, they might worship him at Dan and Bethel as well as in Jerusalem.

It is perfectly clear, too, that all the princes who succeeded Jeroboam, and who continued the idolatrous practices of which he set the example, are much less blamed

* 2 Kings x. 18—29.

by the sacred writers than those who commanded the worship of the Baalim and of other strange gods. Ahab was the first of these sovereigns who openly countenanced the service of foreign divinities: and of him it is recorded by the indignant historian, that 'he did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. For it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal and worshipped him; and he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal which he had built in Samaria; and he made a grove; and he did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.'* On the contrary, those of the kings of Samaria, who, without quitting the sin of Jeroboam, the worship of the calves, destroyed the temples and priests of Baal, are described as persons endowed with a zeal for the glory of the true God, and even as meriting his approbation.†

The first gods mentioned in the books of Judges are Baalim and Ashtaroth. In the second chapter it is stated, that "the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim; and they provoked the Lord God of their fathers which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger: And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth." In the following chapter, it is added, that "they served Baalim and the groves."‡

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* 1 Kings xvi. 30—33. † Jurieu's Critical History of the Doctrines and Worship of the Church, vol. ii. p. 220. ‡ Judges ii. 11, 12, 13.; and iii. 7.

The term Baal, as every person knows, signifies lord or master, and, consequently, may be applied either to gods or to men. The meaning of the word being so very comprehensive, it was frequently used to denote a divinity in general, without any reference to a particular class or even sex. Among Sabaists, the sun was Baal, and the plural form of the expression was applied to the host of heaven. The votaries of hero-worship gave this title to the greatest of their princes; and we accordingly find that no names were more common among the ancient Assyrians than such as included in their formation this sacred syllable, which, to an oriental ear, always indicated majesty and dominion. That the Baalim which the ancient Hebrews adored were the sun, moon, and stars, there can be little doubt, both because the Canaanites at that period were addicted to this species of superstition, and also because, when it is mentioned of Manasseh that he built again the high places of Baal, it is added, "he worshipped all the host of heaven and served them." The name of Baal, indeed, is usually associated with the various astronomical bodies which seem to be spread over the surface of the firmament; and which, as has been already remarked, call forth so powerfully the wonder and obeisance of the rude mind.

There is in the eighteenth chapter of the first book of Kings a striking confirmation of the opinion just mentioned. As the followers of Baal directed their adoration to the principle of fire in the great solar orb, the prophet Elijah resolved to confute by a practical argument the doctrine on which their confidence was known to rest. He proposed that the priests of the false god and himself should each prepare a sacrifice to be consumed on the altar by a supernatural flame; and that their respective claims, as the servants of a divine Being, should be determined

by the answers which should thus be vouchsafed to their prayers. "The former took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar that was made." At noon, the strength of their god had attained its utmost intensity. The solar rays could not be expected to be more powerful, nor hold out during any part of the day a better prospect of success. "And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking or pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them." The defeat of his adversaries was now complete; for after the sun had begun to descend there was no longer any hope that the faggots on the altar would be ignited by the force of his beams. But the prophet of Jehovah determined to put off the convincing display of his divine authority till towards night; when there could be no mistake as to the source whence he derived it. Had he proceeded, while the sun was yet high in the firmament, to call down fire from the presence of God, he might have been regarded by the assembled people as only a more cunning or more potent enchanter than the priests of Baal; and it would, consequently, have still remained doubtful whether Jehovah or the solar deity was the more deserving of their homage. He, therefore, resolved not to interrupt these fanatical idolaters in their superstitious incantations, until the shades of approaching night should have reminded them that their prayers and self-inflicted tortures were equally useless. "And it came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of

the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."

When all hope had vanished that Baal would interpose in behalf of his votaries, Elijah made preparations for the miracle which he knew was about to be performed. "He put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. Then he came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me; that this people may know that thou art the Lord God. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, Jehovah he is the God; Jehovah he is the God."*

The reader of Scripture must be aware, that the term Baal, both in the singular and plural form, was used in reference to the true God,—a farther proof that the Deity was often worshipped by the Israelites under the name and figure of an idol. It was predicted by Hosea, that, in the happy times which were promised to his people after the captivity, they should no longer continue a practice so suspicious and unbecoming. "And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi, and shall call me no more Baali. For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name."†

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* 1 Kings xviii. 21—39.

† Hosea ii. 16, 17. Selden adds the following remark on the form of the word Baali:—Seniores vero pro Baali seu nomine cum affixo pronomine, Baalim pluraliter, ut videtur, ibi legebant. Populus Dei Baalem suum pie

It is well known that other terms of pagan origin were not unfrequently used when speaking of the great Creator of heaven and earth. Both Jews and Christians took occasional offence at this want of discrimination; and taught their followers not to profane by such an association the sacred ideas which belonged to the divine attributes. But it is perhaps more worthy of notice, that the name Baal was applied without distinction to gods of either sex; or, more properly, that the deity represented by that term was supposed to be both male and female. In various parts of the Septuagint version we meet with ἡ βααλ, as well as ὁ βααλ; while in most cases it is not easy to discover the principle which determined the translators in favour of the gender which they have actually adopted.

Every one who is in the smallest degree acquainted with eastern mythology is aware, that the whole system of ancient superstition respects more or less immediately the prolific powers of nature. However numerous may be the names of the divinities which are recognized by any particular creed, we find that they are all reducible to two different forms of the generative energy; the active and the passive, the male and the female. The immortals, accordingly, are always arranged in pairs; and whether it be Jupiter and Juno, or Bacchus and Venus, or Cælus and Terra, we are merely presented with different expressions of the same great physical truth which points to the origin and continuance of the material world.

But as the prolific and productive powers may be conceived to exist in the same individual, the form of language is changed to meet this new idea; and the gods who preside over the generation of organized beings, or

satis eum vocabant, priusquam ob vocem illam ad profana numina frequenter nimis traductam, idipsum ipse Deus vetârat.—*De Diis Syris*, p. 104.

who are themselves the source and maintenance of the stream of life which flows through the successive orders of animated things, are then imagined to combine the two sexes, of which they thus perform all the offices. Hence the mythological writers described the older of their deities as hermaphrodites; and to express in one word the generative and prolific virtues, they had recourse to the use of the term ἀῤῥενοθηλυς, which denoted the union of both in one person. In one of the Orphic hymns, formerly quoted, it is said,

——— Διος δ' ἐκ παντα τετυκται:
Ζευς ἀρσην γενετο, Ζευς ἀμβροτος ἑπλετο νυμφη.

Minerva, again, is addressed in these words:

ἀρσην μεν και θηλυς ἐφυς.

In his tract on Isis and Osiris, the learned Plutarch speaks of the Divine Being as follows:—Ὁ δε νους ὁ θεος ἀῤῥενοθηλυς ὢν ζωη και φως ἀπεκυησε λογον ἑτερον, τον δημιουργον. "God, who is a male and female intelligence, being both life and light, brought forth another intelligence, the Creator of the world." The eastern nations, on this principle, worshipped the moon both as a god and as a goddess; and hence the phrase *Lunus Deus* was not less common than *Luna Dea.**

* The views in the text are farther confirmed by the observations of Macrobius on the well-known verse of the Æneid;

Discedo, ac ducente deo flammam inter et hostes
Expedior:

Cum ille doctissime dixerit *ducente* DEO non DEA, nam et apud Calvum Acterianus affirmat legendum,

Pollentemque deum Venerem,

non *deam*. Signum etiam ejus est Cypri barbatum corpore, sed veste muliebri cum sceptro ac statura virili: et putant eandem marem et feminam esse. Aristophanes eam Αφροδιτον appellat. Levinus etiam sic ait; Venerem igitur almum adorans, sive femina sive mas est, ita uti alma noctiluca est. Philochorus quoque in Atthide eandem affirmat esse lunam; et ei sac-

The statement which has just been quoted affords a key to the greatest mysteries in the Gentile faith; for, as it has been somewhere remarked, while other nations made their physical inquiries subservient to their theology, the philosophers of Egypt and of ancient Greece modelled their theology agreeably to their physics. The worship of the gods was identified with the perception of certain powers and qualities in the constitution of the material universe; and hence, though the names of the divinities changed according to the varying aspect and operations of nature, the attention of the votary was never wholly withdrawn from the main facts of generation and reproduction in the animal and vegetable worlds. There were a great father and a mother, from whom, in one person or in two, all created things originally proceeded, and continued to receive a renewed existence; and the gods that afterwards arose to divide the reverence of the ignorant and superstitious tribes which peopled Egypt and Syria, were only different forms of the same eternal parents; or rather, perhaps, different conceptions of the mode and circumstances in which their energies were put forth.

Proceeding on this ground, we shall discover the reason why Baal is confounded with the idol, whose image was exhibited in the obscene worship of the phallus. We find in the ancient Scriptures, that the Hebrews imitated the surrounding nations in their adoration of Baal-peor, Baal-pehor, or Baal-phegor; a god, who, in certain expressions of his character, is supposed to have represented the generative principle in animal nature. The allusion to this divinity in the book of Numbers confirms in some

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rificium facere viros cum veste muliebri, mulieres cum virili; quod eadem et mas estimatur et femina.—*Macrob. Saturnalia*, lib. iii. c. 8. See also *Spencer's Critical History*, vol. II. part iv. p. 59, 60.; *and Banier's Mythology and Fables of the Ancients*, vol. II. book vii. chap. 6.

degree the opinion now given; for the licentiousness with which the Israelites are charged while they abode in Shittim, is recorded by the sacred historian in connection with their worship of this pagan idol. The daughters of Moab called the people unto the sacrifice of their gods; and the people did eat and bowed down to their gods, and Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.*

The same gross idolatry is understood to be alluded to in a later portion of the Hebrew annals; where it is said "concerning Maachah, the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it and burnt it at the brook Kidron.† In the Vulgate translation this passage is rendered as follows: Sed et Maacham matrem Asa Regis ex augusto imperio deposuit, eo quod fecisset in luco simulacrum Priapi: quod omne contrivit, et, in frusta comminuens, combussit in torrente Cedron.

I purposely avoid all repetition of the numerous conjectures which have employed the ingenuity of expositors on the character of Baal-peor. Suffice it to say, that this idol originally meant the sun; and that as the warmth of the solar beams is indispensable to fecundity in every part of organic nature, the gross imagination of a superstitious people deified this attribute of their god, and worshipped it under an expressive and palpable emblem. Nor will it be difficult to reconcile to this general view the opinion of those who maintain that Baal-peor is in some parts of Scripture confounded with the Stygian Jupiter, or Pluto. In the hundred and sixth Psalm, for example, where the crimes of the Israelites are recapitulated, it is mentioned

* Numbers xxv. 1, 2, 3. † 2 Chronicles xv. 16.

that the people "joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead;" and that this accusation refers to the memorable defection at Shittim, is placed beyond all doubt by the remarks which follow. "Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions, and the plague broke in upon them. Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment, and so the plague was stayed."*

To eat the sacrifices of the dead is an expression which is supposed to allude to the practice of offering oblations of meats and drinks to the Manes or infernal gods. But so flexible was the mythological system of the ancients, and so complicated were the notions upon which their rites were founded, that we are not to despair of discovering, in the homage paid to the departed, a distinct reference to the physical qualities of matter. During a part of the year, the great power which calls all nature into life and activity, appears to withdraw his influence, and to retire into the lower regions. Death, to whom the Greeks gave the name of Pluto, gets possession of the world. He steals away Proserpine, which means production, the daughter of Ceres, or the earth, and retains her in his dark dominions three long months. Then it was that Isis wept for Osiris, who had deserted her society; that Venus bewailed the loss of Adonis, who had been snatched away to the regions of mortality; in other words, that the Earth deplored the retirement of the Sun: and hence all the mystic observances which bore an allusion to the change of the seasons and the decay of nature, may be understood in a certain sense as being sacrifices to the dead. In winter, Mithres, Baal, Osiris, Bacchus, Apollo, or whatever other personification

* Psalm cvi. 28, 29, 30.

there might be of the solar influence, was the Stygian Jove; and we know that the oblations which were made to this divinity were sometimes described as offerings to the shades below.

The several periods at which were kept the feasts in honour of Proserpine and Ceres, contribute to establish this opinion; the Rape of the former being commemorated towards the time of harvest, while the Search of the latter was celebrated in the spring; both institutions, as Banier observes, bearing an allusion to the different states of the corn in the different seasons of the year.* These facts enable us once more to perceive the principle upon which the whole mythological structure has its foundation; being no other than a pious recognition of the two great physical agents upon whose union and reciprocal influence the perpetuity of nature was supposed to have its main dependence. The Israelites, therefore, in adopting the pagan ceremonies which were practised in the plains of Moab in honour of Baal-peor, followed the example not only of the people among whom they then were, but also of the nation from which they had recently emigrated; where the priests of Isis annually performed sacrifice to Osiris, the dead husband of the queen of heaven.

This superstition, no doubt, like all the other rites of physical theology, was at a later period directed to the commemoration of princes and other distinguished persons; and was also perhaps employed with the view of appeasing the vindictive spirits which were supposed to bear rule in the regions under the earth. But I have not been able to discover any evidence that such worship began so early as the days of Moses; for which reason I

* Banier's Mythology and Fables of the Ancients explained from History, book iv. chap. 10. Diodorus Siculus, lib. v. c. 2.

am inclined to doubt the accuracy of the conclusion stated by Mede and Bishop Patrick, who, availing themselves of an apparent authority quoted by Selden, have given it as their opinion, that the Moabites, under the name of Baal-peor, paid religious homage to some dead man.*

Besides Baal-peor, we read in the Old Testament of Baal-zebub, Baal-zephon, Baal-gad, and Baal-berith; all names of the same divinity viewed under different characters and relations.

BAAL-ZEBUB, which literally means the god-fly, or the god of flies, is a term which probably bears some allusion to the swarms of annoying and destructive insects produced in hot climates by the heat of the sun. In the second book of the Kings, we read that Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover.† But as the etymology of the

* On this occurrence at Shittim, the learned bishop has the following note:—The daughters of Moab called the people to a feast; for the ordinary charms unto idolatry were good victuals and bad women. And, indeed, it hath been observed, by the writers of the church, that women have been the most dangerous seducers of men from the true religion; being from the beginning the spreaders of the old heresies. For Simon Magus advanced his heresy, *Helenæ meretricis adjutus auxilio*, being assisted by the help of the harlot Helena. Nicolaus of Antioch also *duxit choros femineos*. The famous Marcion sent before him some Roman ladies to prepare the way. Apelles, Montanus, Arius, Donatus, did all take the same course, as St Hierom shows in his book *contra Pelagianos*.—*Patrick's Commentary on Num.* xxv. 1, 2.

Sacrificia autem quæ, Mose teste, in Phegorii sacris comedebantur, inferiæ erant in memoriam defunctorum peractæ: quod docet Psalmographus, Psalm cv. Adjuncti sunt Baal-peor, et comederunt sacrificia Mortuorum, Locum ita pangit Apollinarius,

Ὁι δε Βεελφεγοροιο μιανομενοι τελετῇσι
Νερτεριης ἐπαρωντο καταφθιμενων ἑκατομβης.

Victimas Diis Manibus seu Jovi Stygio (qui Moth Phenicibus dictus, id est, Pluto, sive Mortuorum Deus) mactabant et rite epulantes justa faciebant, ac si novendiales ferias agerent. Hic cultus, hæc idola sacra.—*Selden de Diis Syris*, Syntag. 1. p. 72.

† 2 Kings, chap. i. verse 2.

word remains unsettled, various attempts have been made by commentators to clothe it with a meaning very different from the one just mentioned. Some have traced its derivation to בעל שמים, the lord of heaven, or בעל צבאות; and maintain that the Jews, who took pleasure in disfiguring the names of the false gods,* changed it into בעל זבוב, the god of flies, or into בעל זבול, the god of ordure. It is known that the prophets in derision altered Bethel, which means the *house of God*, into Bethaven, which signifies the *house of iniquity;* because at the latter place Jeroboam had set up one of his golden calves.

But there is no reason to suspect that the Jews made any innovation on the name of the god of Ekron. Flies were sometimes made the instrument of the most frightful calamities that were ever inflicted upon a sinful people; and as they appear to derive their origin, their numbers, and their strength, from the genial influence of the solar rays, it is not surprising that in the moment of distress the heathen worshipper should lift up his eyes to Baal, and entreat an intermission of the plague. The author of the Book of Wisdom celebrates, in a song of praise, the effect which was produced upon the nations of Canaan by the sting of the hornet or wasp; which he describes as the "forerunners of the Lord's host who were to destroy the people by little and little. Whereas men have lived dissolutely and unrighteously, thou hast tormented them with their own abominable idols. For they went astray very far in the ways of error, and held them for gods which, even among the beasts of their enemies, were despised."*

Pliny likewise assures us, that the people of Elis were

* Wisdom of Solomon xii. 8, 23, 24. See also Exodus xxiii. 28, and Deuteronomy xxiv. 12.

wont to invoke Myiagron, the god who chases away flies, whensoever swarms of that insect brought the pestilence into their land; adding, that they died on the very day on which the sacrifice was made to the divinity. Invocant et Egyptii ibes suas contra serpentium adventum: et Elii Myagron deum, muscarum multitudine pestilentiam adferente: quæ protinus intereunt qua litatum est illi die.* But the Greeks acknowledged a similar idol in their *Hercules Myades*, or *Myiagron*, the fly-hunter;† and as Hercules was the sun, we thus find in the pantheon of Attica the very same god which was worshipped at Ekron, and called among the ancient Syrians, and the superstitious Hebrews, by the name of Baal-zebub.

In the New Testament, Baal-zebub is denominated the prince or chief of the devils, and is, in fact, in several parts of the gospel identified with Satan himself.‡ The Pharisees declared concerning our Saviour, that "he

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* Plin. Hist. Naturalis, lib. x. c. 28, p. 177. † Pausan. in Eliac.

‡ Meminere hujus idoli verum sub Principis Dæmoniorum nomine, Latina, Ebræa, quæ circumfertur, et Syriaca D. Matthæi, Marci, et Lucæ versiones. In quibus tamen pro Beelzebub, Græcorum pleraque, et doctorum sententiâ, optima exemplari Βεελζεβουλ habent: atque vetustissima Arabica a viro Cl. Thoma Erpenio superioribus nundinis edita באעלזבול ubique retinet. Beelzebul autem sonat *Jupiter*, *Belus*, sive *Dominus Stercoreus*, aut *Stercoris*. Certe et D. Chrysostomus Βεελζεβουλ legit; ita etiam Origenis, Athanasius, Cyrillus, plerique Veterum.

Adjiciam quod de stercoreis habet Abraham Ben-kattun, ubi versum 33, capitis xxiii. Exodi, ad hunc modum explicat. *Non sines apud te habitare qui colunt Deos peregrinos vel* STERCOREOS. Stercoreos in opprobrium hic dictos nullus dubito. Atqui ob quam rem ad principem dæmoniorum denotandum usurpetur Beelzebub aut Beelzebul (dum tamen innuebant Beelzebub) fateor cum Origine, me omnino latere. Nescire se scribit ille unde didicerent illius ævi homines τα περι Βεελζεβουλ; sed vide, si placet, Responsorum quæ Justino Martyri tribuuntur lxxxii, ubi nomen isthoc ab ipsis dæmoniis sacrificantes et ἀποδους dedicisse, scriptor ille, quisquis fuerit, autumnatur. Neque hunc faciunt Ebræorum monumenta Dæmoniorum principem, sed Ashmodæum potius. Ecclesiasticus, cap. 1.—*Selden De Diis Syris*, p. 210-212.

cast out devils through Baal-zebub, the prince of the devils:" to which charge Jesus replied, "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself, how then shall his kingdom stand?"* In this instance the idol-god of Ekron is admitted to be the same with the great enemy of human happiness and virtue,—a fact which has induced some critics to imagine that the terms Baal-zebub and Baal-zebaoth have been confounded, and that the lord of flies has taken the place of the lord of the heavenly bodies.

But this apparent difficulty will be removed by applying the general principle stated above; namely, that Baal, whatever may be the adjunct which is made to his name, is still the sun,—the greatest object in the visible heavens, and the leader and prince of all the inferior stars or Baalim. Whether the magnificent solar god be represented as giving life and vigour to the whole animal creation, or only as animating and destroying flies; whether he clothe the hills and the valleys with abundance, or only give existence to a destructive serpent; he is still the same acknowledged sovereign of that mighty host which has received in all nations the first and warmest adoration of ignorant, fallen, man.

At the era of the gospel, the physical gods of older times had already lent their names to an order of spirits, many of whom derived their origin from a mixture of pagan notions, combined with the truths of revelation and the traditions of the first fathers of the Gentile world. The title of Baal, or lord, originally bestowed upon the fountain of material light, was then applied with a variety of epithets to the chief of the rebellious angels; and our Saviour, who did not decline to use the language which he

* Matt. xii. 24—26.

found established in his age, sanctioned the application of the term Baal-zebub to that malignant demon who was a liar from the beginning.

BAAL-GAD is another form of this idol's name, which, from its ambiguous import, has occasioned to biblical critics no small difficulty. It is known to have originally signified a troop or multitude; and hence, when Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, bare a son, the former exclaimed, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad.* The Seventy have translated the word בגד into the phrase ἐν τύχῃ; as if the wife of Jacob had meant to say, that the child had come in a lucky hour, or under the influence of a happy star.

Gad, says Calmet, is a false divinity, which was apparently the sun or Good Fortune; and several other writers, trusting to the accuracy of the Greek version, have adopted the same opinion. The Latin Vulgate has taken בגד in the sense of *feliciter*, happily; proceeding on a similar view of the original, but without bringing forward any authority from the usage of the language to justify so singular an exposition. It is perfectly clear, that the patriarch Jacob applied the word in the simple acceptation in which it appears to have been uttered by Leah, when, on the approach of death, he depicted the future fortune of his sons and of the tribes which were to bear their names,—"Gad, a troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at the last."†

The term in question, so far as I can discover, occurs only five times in the Old Testament; namely, in the two passages already quoted; once in Exodus; once in Numbers; and once in Isaiah.‡ In the second and fourth books of the Pentateuch, it is employed, by the sacred writer, in

* Genesis xxx. ii. ותאמר לאה בגד. † Genesis xlix. 19. Exodus xvi. 31. ‡ Numbers xi. 7. Isaiah lxv. 11.

his description of manna; where, according to our version, the heavenly food is said to have been גוד כזרע לבן white "like coriander seed," ἦν δὲ ὡσεὶ σπέρμα κορίου λευκον.

In the sixty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, the notice alluded to is as follows:—"Ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink-offering unto that number." This translation, it must be acknowledged, does not convey a very precise meaning; and the obscurity attached to it is only farther increased, when we read in the Seventy, Ye are they who prepare to the demon a table, and fill a cup of mixed wine to Fortune.* Munster, again, translates the passage in these terms: Præparantes Gad (Jovi) mensam, et implentes Planetis libamen; preparing for Gad a table, and filling up a libation to the planets.

It is manifest, as well from the version of the Seventy as from the commentaries of the most learned among the Jews, that the words גד and מני were understood, in the times bordering on the captivity, to denote the sun and the stars; or, perhaps, the various orders of demons to whom the names of the heavenly host had already been extended.

That Leah and Jacob had no respect to the celestial armies when they applied the name Gad to the son of Zilpah, is an assertion that will not require many arguments to support it. The family of the patriarch, though not very pure or enlightened in their religious notions, did not assuredly continue to venerate the principles of Sabaism. The daughter of Laban, who had been accustomed to the consultation of the Teraphim which her sister stole, might not be altogether free from superstitious feelings,

* Ἑτοιμάσοντες τῷ Δαίμονιῳ τράπεζαν καὶ πληροῦντες τῇ τύχῃ κίρασμα.

even after she was united to a near descendant of the father of the faithful. But had she exclaimed, upon the birth of a male-child, בא גד, *a demon cometh!* she must have exposed at once her sense and her piety to the most serious impeachment.* Or when Jacob predicted of Gad, that a troop should overcome him, but that he should overcome at the last, is it to be imagined that the parent of the twelve tribes foresaw that the offspring of his child was to wage war with the host of heaven, and, finally, to gain a victory over the sun, moon, and stars?†

In those early times, therefore, the word Gad meant nothing more than a troop or multitude in general; and hence Baal-gad, as applied to the sun, was only intended to express his sovereignty when compared with the inferior luminaries, of which he might well be called the lord. But at a later period, agreeably to the usual progress of language and of superstition, the generic epithet became particular. The lord of the multitude was then regarded as an individual leader; and we find, accordingly, that the Seventy, who paid more attention to the import of the term in their own day, than to its original and grammatical signification, translate גד into Demon, and מני, which means *number*, into Fortune. Had they proceeded consistently, they would have anticipated the version of Munster, and rendered the former noun Sun, and the

* Augustine is compelled to allow, that, even if her exclamation had a reference to the fortunate conjunction or aspect of the stars, she must have spoken under the influence of a heathenish education. Certe Lia propterea sic locuta est, quod adhuc Gentilitatis consuetudinem retinebat.—*Selden De Diis Syris*, p. 4.

† Mr Bate, indeed, in his Critica Heb., supposes that Baal or Gad denotes the *destructive* troops mentioned, Job xxv. 3.; the heavens in thunder, lightning, storm, tempest, fiery winds, and the like; and that the Israelites worshipped the *heavens* under this attribute, for the same reason as the Indians are said to worship the devil, namely, that they might not hurt them. —*Parkhurst's Hebrew Lexicon.*

latter Planets; and I will add, they would thereby have conveyed more fully the conception of the prophet, who certainly intended to charge the Jews with an act of Sabian idolatry.

For these reasons, the antiquary and critic will probably agree with me in the conclusion, that Baal-gad, as worshipped by the ancient Hebrews, was merely the sun; and that the astrological fancies which have since been associated with the name of that god, originated at an era considerably more recent than the days of Jacob or even of Moses. Gad, as Bishop Patrick remarks, never denotes *fortune* any where but in the Targum of Onkelos and Jonathan, and among the Rabbins who follow them; and, therefore, this may be looked upon as a later, not the ancient signification of the word.*

Baal-berith, or the lord of the covenant, is mentioned in the book of Judges as the god of the Shechemites. "It came to pass as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god. And the children of Israel remembered not the Lord their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side." We are likewise informed, that this divinity had a temple at Shechem; for when it was resolved to invest Abimelech with the authority of Judge, the men of that place gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-berith, wherewith he hired vain and light persons which followed him.† In the forty-sixth verse of the same chapter, we observe a distinct notice of the same idol, under the simple name of Berith. "And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard

* Commentary on Genesis, chap. xxx. ii.

† Judges viii. 33, 34, and ix. 4.

that, they entered in an hold of the house of the god Berith."

The simplest and most natural manner of explaining the name of Baal-berith, is, as Calmet remarks, to take it as the general appellation of the god who presided over contracts and oaths. In this sense the true God might be called the God of covenants; and if the Scripture had not added the name of Baal to that of Berith, one might have expounded the passage as applicable to Jehovah. But the most barbarous nations, as well as the most superstitious, the most religious and the most enlightened, have always invoked God to witness their engagements and their oaths. The Greeks had their Ζευς Ὁρκιος, and the Latins their *Deus fidius*, or Jupiter Pistius, to avenge the cause of truth, and to punish the violation of treaties.

It has not escaped observation, that neither the Septuagint version, nor the vulgar Latin of St. Jerome, exhibits the word Berith as a proper name, but merely as a common appellative. The former renders the thirty-third verse of the eighth chapter of Judges, ἐθηκαν αὐτοις τω βααλ διαθηκην του ειναι αὐτοις αὐτον εἰς θεον; and the latter, *percusserunt cum Baal fœdus ut esset iis in deum*. Both these authorities take Berith in the sense of a covenant, and relate that the Israelites made a compact with Baal that he might be their god. But the greater number of Jewish interpreters expound the passage in Judges so as to make Berith a proper name; and it is obvious that it is quite impossible to translate בית אל בריח in the forty-sixth verse of the ninth chapter, without assuming the personality of the idol to whom the "hold of the house" appertained.

Every writer on this subject has adverted to an attribute of the Roman Jupiter expressed by the epithet *lapideus*, and derived, it is thought, from a ceremony observed in the confirmation of treaties; when each of the

parties took a stone in his hand, and said, *si sciens fallam, me Diespiter, salva urbe arceque, bonis ejiciat, ut ego hunc lapidem.* The divinity whom they invoked was even called Jupiter Lapis, Jupiter the stone. *Quid igitur jurabo?* says Apuleius. *Per Jovem Lapidem, Romano vetustissimo more.**

This train of reasoning naturally reminds us of Bryant's very ingenious observation on the words *Pator, Petora,* and Petra, as connected with the Egyptian name of the sun. This deity was called Pator, and his shrines Petora. "These," says the author of the Analysis of Ancient Mythology, "were oracular temples of the sun; which in after times were called Petra, and ascribed to other gods. Many of them, for the sake of mariners, were erected upon rocks and eminences near the sea; hence the term πετρα, petra, came at length to signify any rock or stone, and to be in a manner confined to that meaning. But in the first ages it was ever taken in a religious sense; and related to the shrines of Osiris or the sun, and to the oracles which were supposed to be there exhibited. Thus Olympus, near Pisa, though no rock, but a huge mound or hill (λοφος,) was of old termed Petra, as relating to oracular influence. Hence Pindar, speaking of Jämus, who was supposed to have been conducted by Apollo to Olympia, says that they both came to the Petra Elibatos, upon the lofty Cronian mount; there Apollo bestowed upon Jämus a double portion of prophetic knowledge:

Ἱκοντο δ' ὑψηλοιο Πετρας
Ἁλιβατου κρονιου
Ἐνθ' οἱ ὤπασε θησαυρον
Διδυμον ΜΑΝΤΟΣΥΝΑΣ.†

* Calmet. Dict. Baal-berith: Banier, vol. ii. p. 59. Jurieu's Critical Hist., vol. II. part iv. p. 82, 83. Apuleius, De Deo Socratis. Pausanias in Eliacis.

† Pindar, Olympic. ode vi.

"The word ηλιβατος, Elibatos, was a favourite term with Homer and other poets; and is uniformly joined with Petra. They do not seem to have known the purport of it; yet they adhere to it religiously, and introduce it wherever they have an opportunity. ηλιβατος is an Amonian compound of Eli-bat, and signifies *solis domus vel templum.** It was the name of the temple, and specified the deity there worshipped. In like manner, the word Petra had in a great measure lost its meaning; yet it is wonderful to observe how industriously it is introduced by writers when they speak of sacred and oracular places. Lycophron calls the temple at Elis Αιγεαν Μολπιδος πετραν; and the Pytho at Delphi is by Pindar styled Petraëssa.† Orchomenos was a place of great antiquity; and the natives are said to have worshipped Petra, which were supposed to have fallen from heaven.‡

"In short, there is in the history of every oracular temple some legend about a stone; some reference to the word Petra. To clear up this it is necessary to observe, that when the worship of the sun was almost universal, this was one name of that deity even among the Greeks. They called him Petor, and Petros; and his temple was called Petra. This they oftentimes changed to λιθος; so little did they understand their own mythology. There were, however, some writers who mentioned it as the name of the sun, and were not totally ignorant of its meaning. This we may learn from the Scholiast upon Pindar. Περι δε του Ηλιου οι φυσικοι φασιν ως λιθος καλειται ο Ηλιος. Και Αναξαγορου γενομενου Ευριπιδην μαθητην Πετρον ειρηκεναι τον Ηλιον δια των προκειμενων.

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* The Greeks must have considered it to be a compound of Ηλιος and Βαινω, and, as an epithet, descriptive of the places to which Apollo or the Sun descended to confer his inspirations.

† Pindar's Olym. ode vi. ‡ Pausanias, lib. ix.

Ὁ γαρ Μακαριος, κ' ουκ ονειδιζω τυχας,
Διος πεφυκως, ὡς λεγουσι, Τανταλος,
Κορυφης ὑπερτελλοντα δειμαινων ΠΕΤΡΟΝ,
Αερι ποταται, και τινει ταυτην δικην.

The Scholiast quotes a similar passage, from the same writer, where the sun is called Petra:

Μολοιμι την ουρανου μεσαν
Χθονος τε τεταμενην ἀιωρημασι πετραν
Αλυσεσι χρυσειαις φερομενην.

If then the name of the sun and of his temples among the ancient Grecians was Petros and Petra, we may easily account for that word so often occurring in the accounts of his worship. The Scholiast mentioned above will, moreover, lead us to discover whence the strange notion arose about the famous Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ; who is said to have prophesied that a stone would fall from the sun. All that he had averred may be seen in the relation of that Scholiast; which amounts only to this, that Petros was a name of the sun.

Now, if the Greeks in later times so far forgot the original meaning of Petra as to translate it by the word λιθος, is it at all improbable that the Romans only perpetuated the error, when they gave to Jupiter the adjunct of *lapideus*, and invoked him by the name of *Jupiter Lapis? Quid igitur jurabo? Per Jovem lapidem, Romanorum antiquissimo more.*

The original import of this judicial form was, no doubt, the invocation of the sun, the greatest of the gods; who witnessed all earthly transactions, and who was ever ready with his darts to punish every breach of faith. The history of the mistake, too, in both the Greek and Latin languages, is perfectly plain. Ignorant of the Egyptian

derivation of Petros and Petra, the mythologists of Attica substituted their own term λιθος; while those of Rome, who were content to borrow from their more inquisitive neighbours their religion as well as their literature, blindly adopted the version now mentioned, and proceeded to address the most exalted of their divinities by the name of *Lapis*, the stone!

May I be permitted to indulge the conjecture, that the expression *Pater Patratus* of the Latins had its origin in the same source? This office-bearer, it is well known, was appointed to conduct and sanction treaties between the Romans and the nations with which they had been engaged in war, and to ratify the compact with certain religious ceremonies. He lifted up his voice to Jupiter or Diespater, the father of day, entreating him to listen to the oaths which were about to be uttered, and to take vengeance on the first violators of the covenant, into which the parties were about to enter.* The verb *patrare* is usually derived from pater, *a father*, merely, it should seem, because it bears some resemblance to it in the initial letters. But the meaning, in this case, does not at all accord with the supposed etymology. There was nothing relating to paternity in the duties of the pater patratus. He acted the part of a priest in respect to the deity whom he addressed; and of an ambassador in regard to the foreign people whose plight he was to receive: but, proceeding on the common derivation of *patratus*, we cannot discover, in all the func-

* Audi, inquit, Jupiter, audi, pater patrate, populi Albani, audi tu, populus Albanus; ut illa palam prima postrema ex illis tabulis cerâve recitata sunt, sine dolo malo, utique ea hic hodie rectissime intellecta sunt, illis legibus populus Romanus prior non deficiet. Si prior defexit publico consilio, dolo malo, tu illo die, Jupiter, populum Romanum sic ferito, ut ego hunc porcum hodie feriam; tantoque magis ferito, quanto magis potes pollesque. Id ubi dixit, saxo silice percussit.—*Livii Hist.* lib. i. c. 24.

tions of his high office, a single act which would enable us to trace a connection between that office and the title affixed to his name.

Before I leave this article, I must solicit the attention of the reader to the following notice which is contained in the fragment of Sanchoniatho preserved by Eusebius:— After having given a catalogue of the earlier Phenician gods, he mentions, that, in the age of the Dioscouroi, were born, a certain man called Eliun, also denominated the Most High, and a woman, whose name was Beruth.* These two persons lived in the neighbourhood of Byblos; and, it is added, there was begotten of them Epigeios, a terrestrial being, whom they afterwards called Uranus, or the material heavens, from whom that sublime element, which revolves over our heads, received its name. To him there was born a sister by the same parents, who was called Earth; after whom, on account of its beauty, the same name was bestowed upon the terraqueous globe. Heaven afterwards married Earth, and had sons.

Elion, or Eliun, it is allowed by all mythologists, everywhere denotes the sun, the first and greatest of gods. But who is Berith, from whose union or co-operation proceeded the heaven and the earth? It is, without doubt, the prolific energy in nature, upon which the generative power of Elion acts, and thereby gives life to all the animal and vegetable tribes. In the oriental tongues, ברא signifies to create, and בריתא denotes the creative virtue, taken in the

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* Κατα τουτοις γινεται τις Ελιουν καλουμενος Ὑψιστος. · Και Θηλεια λεγομενα Βερουθ, οἱ και κατωκουν περι Βυβλον. Ἐξ ὧν γινονται Επιγειος ἡ Αυτοχθων, ὁν ὑστερον, ἐκαλεσαν Οὐρανον. Ὃς ἀπ' αὐτου και το ὑπερ ἡμας στοιχειον, δι' ὑπερβαλην του καλλους, ὀνομαζειν ὐρανον. Γεινονται δε τουτῳ ἀδελφη ἐκ των προειρημενων, ἡ και ἐκληθη Γη, και δια το καλλος, ἀπ' αὐτης, φησιν, εκαλεσαν την ὁμωνυμον γην—Ὁ ὐρανος αχεται προς γαμον την ἀδελφην γην, και ποιειται ἐξ αυτης παιδας.—*Euseb. Prædp. Evangel.* lib. i. p. 36.

feminine or passive sense. Elion and Berith, therefore, are the two great physical agents from whose operation this part of the visible universe is supposed to have taken its rise. We find the latter power disguised under the names of Beroe and of Rhea; the one, the daughter of Adonis and Venus, the other, the mother of the gods; and both denoting the same natural qualities in the constitution of things, upon the activity of which depends the perpetuity of organized forms.

So much appeared necessary to prevent such confusion of ideas as might originate in the similarity of names,—an obscurity from which the works of several distinguished authors are not altogether free.

MOLOCH and CHEMOSH, the one the god of the Ammonites, and the other of the Moabites, are mentioned in various parts of the Old Testament. In the eleventh chapter of the first book of Kings, it is related, that Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Moloch the abomination of the children of Ammon. The former of those idols is particularized in the twenty-first chapter of Numbers in these impressive words:—Woe to thee, Moab! thou art undone, O people of Chemosh! he hath given his sons that escaped, and his daughters, into captivity unto Sihon king of the Amorites.

We are told, by St Jerome, that the name of this Moabitish idol comes from an Arabic root which denotes great rapidity of motion. It is the same, he adds, as Baal-peor, and was worshipped in the same indecent manner. In Nabo erat Chamos idolum consecratum, quod alio nomine appellatur Beel-phagor. There is no doubt, indeed, that Chemosh was the sun, and that the rites which were followed by his superstitious votaries in Canaan bore a striking resemblance to those which were everywhere else

observed by the worshippers of fire. But it is equally certain, from the sacred narrative, that the fane of Chemosh was only in the immediate neighbourhood of the temple where Baal-peor was adored; for it is said, in the book of Deuteronomy, that "Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo," where he died, and in one of the valleys of which he was buried over-against Beth-peor.* It appears therefore, that the mount, upon which the temple of Chemosh stood, was not absolutely the same with that of Peor, whereon was built the house of Baal; and, consequently, that the two idols were in some respects different both as to their locality and the specific object of their worship.

Peor, it is probable, was resorted to on the great festivals, when oblations were made to the solar deity, and when the people indulged in those licentious ceremonies which shadowed forth the gross qualities in their god, which they thought it not unbecoming to imitate and applaud. Nebo, on the other hand, may be supposed to have been approached by devotees who were influenced by less sensual motives; for it would appear that the idol of Chemos was oracular, and that responses were given on his holy hill to such of the children of Moab as had faith in his prescience, as well as in the honesty of his priests. This view of his character, however, has no firmer basis than a Hebrew root; twisted, too, with some force, in order to meet the ends of an hypothesis. Nebo, says Jurieu, signifies prophecy נבואה; and when He and Aleph are left out, the name of the idol is written נבו.† But there is much more probability in the opinion of Parkhurst, who derives נבו from נבב to *bud, germinate,* or *produce fruit;*

* Deuteronomy xxxii. 49.; xxxiv. 1, 5, 6.

† Critical History of the Doctrines and Worship of the Church, vol. II. part iv. p. 16, 17.

and who thinks that by "Nebo is meant the *fructifying*, or *generative* and vegetative power of the heavens, which they worshipped under this name. That this is a very high attribute we may be pretty certain from its entering into the composition of so many great names among the Babylonians; Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan, Nebonassar, Nabopolassar, Nabonnedus, and Samgar-nebo."*

Moloch is remarkable for the cruel rites attached to his name, in all ancient history both sacred and profane. So early as the days of Moses the worship of that horrid idol was prohibited in the following strong terms:—"Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Moloch, he shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones. And I will set my face against that man, and I will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto Moloch, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name. And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Moloch, and kill him not, then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Moloch, from among their people."†

Of the image of this false deity the following account is given by Rabbi Simeon:—"All the houses of idols," says he, "were in the city of Jerusalem, except that of Moloch, which was out of the city in a separate place. This idol was represented by a statue, with the head of an ox, and the arms stretched like those of a man who opens his hand to receive something from another. It was hollow

* Parkhurst's Heb. Lexicon, voce בב.

† Leviticus xx. 2, 3, 4.

within; and there were seven chapels built, before which the image was raised. He that offered a fowl or a young pigeon went into the first chapel. If one offered a sheep or a lamb, he went into the second chapel; if a ram, into the third; if a calf, into the fourth; if a bullock, into the fifth; if an ox, into the sixth. But he alone who offered his own son went into the seventh chapel, and kissed the idol of Moloch, as it is written in Hosea xiii. 2. זבחי אדם, *vitulum osculantur*. The child was placed before the idol, and a fire made under it, till it became red hot and bright as the very light. Then the priests took the child and thrust him into the glowing hands of Moloch; and, lest his parents should hear his cries, they beat the drum to drown the noise. Therefore was the place called Tophet, from תוף *toph*, the plural of which, תופים tophim, signifies drums."*

Certain Jewish writers, with the view, no doubt, of extenuating the crimes with which their ancestors are chargeable, have maintained that the children which were presented to Moloch were not actually sacrificed nor burnt to death, but merely passed through the flames by way of lustration, and received as it were a baptism by fire. The learned Maimonides, for example, states that in the early times the worshippers of fire informed the people, that all their children, sons and daughters, that were not made to pass through that element would die; and doubtless as

* Rabbi Simeon's Commentary on the Bible, apud Jurieu. The description quoted by Selden, from the Paraphrase of Paulus Fagius, is to the same effect. Fuit autem Moloch imago concava habens septem conclavia. Unum aperiebant similæ offerendæ; aliud turturibus; tertium ovi; quartum arieti; quintum vitulo; sextum bovi: Qui vero volebat offerre filium huic aperiebatur septimum cubiculum, et facies hujus idoli erat ut facies vituli. Manus plane dispositae ad recipiendum ab astantibus. Et saltabant interim quo puer in idolo succenso igne cremabatur, percutientes tympana ne pueri ejulatus audiretur.—*Selden De Diis Syris*, p. 78.

they were brought unto this persuasion they hastened to do it, being in fear for the lives of their children. But the thing was easy, for they made them only pass their children through the fire, and did not burn them.*

Rabbi Levi Ben Gerson entertained the same opinion, and added, that only a part of every family was required to perform the ceremony of lustration. The father either put his child into the hands of the priest, who walked with it in his arms between two rows of burning piles, or was allowed to make the procession in his own person, carrying the infant on his shoulders. Pater aiunt nonnulli, sacerdotibus puerum ritu solemni tradidit, quem ab iis redditum ipse traducebat humeris gestans. Alii sacerdotes traduxisse volunt.

The versions of the Seventy and of the Latin Vulgate unquestionably favour this interpretation. The former translates the precept in the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire;" as follows, Ουχ' ευρεθησεται εν σοι περικαθαιρων τον υιον αυτου και την θυγατερα αυτου εν πυρι. The Latin renders the passage in these terms: Non inveniatur in te qui lustret filium suum, aut filiam suam per ignem.

But it cannot be concealed, that there are, in the ancient Scriptures, numerous, most distinct, and unambiguous assurances respecting the actual sacrifice of children before the shrine of Moloch. For instance, in the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel the inspired servant of Jehovah re-

* Servitores ignis in tempore suo fecerunt homines scire quod qui non traducerunt filium suum vel filiam per ignem, morerentur filii vel filiæ: et sine dubio propter illud quod audiebant quilibet festinabant illud facere, quia multum timebant super filios suos, et propter facilitatem operis, quia non erat nisi traducere illos per ignem, non quod comburerent ipsos.—*Moses Maim. More Nevochim*, lib. iii. c. 38.

monstrates thus with his idolatrous countrymen :—"Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men; and tookest thy broidered garments and coveredst them; and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them. My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour and oil and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou hast even set it before them for a sweet savour; and thus it was, saith the Lord God. Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters which thou, hast born unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured: is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them?"

The prophet Jeremiah, in like manner, declares, that the Israelites had "built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire."* The following description supplied by the author of the Book of Wisdom, refers, no doubt, to the original inhabitants of Canaan; but as the grossest part of their worship was from time to time adopted by their Hebrew successors, the foul practices which the son of Sirach condemns in it were not, it may be presumed, confined to the age of pure heathenism. "For it was thy will to destroy by the hands of our fathers both those old inhabitants of thy holy land, whom thou hatest for doing most odious works of witchcraft and wicked sacrifices; and also those merciless murderers of children, and devourers of man's flesh, and the feasts of blood; with their priests out of the midst of their idolatrous crew, and the parents that killed with

* Jeremiah vii. 31.

their own hands babes destitute of help."* "Moreover, this was not enough for them that they erred in the knowledge of God, but whereas they lived in the great war of ignorance, those so great plagues called they peace. For whilst they slew their children in sacrifices, or used secret ceremonies, or made revellings of strange rites, they," &c.†

But, perhaps, the most explicit narrative that is any where to be found in regard to this point, occurs in the hundred and sixth Psalm, at the thirty-seventh verse: "Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood."

There cannot, then, be any ground for doubt as to the barbarous nature of the worship which was paid to Moloch in ancient times. We learn from Sanchoniatho, the author to whom we owe our earliest knowledge of Phenician history, that it was customary with the people of Syria, when they were afflicted with plague or famine, to sacrifice their children in order to appease the anger of the gods. He assures us that Chronus, the first of their kings, offered up his only son to Uranus, that he might obtain relief from a dreadful calamity with which his country was desolated. But, instead of crowding the text with quotations which may not prove interesting to the general reader, I shall throw into the form of a note some of the principal testimonies which have been derived from the works of the learned on this interesting inquiry.‡

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* Wisdom of Solomon, xii. 3, 4, 5, 6. † Wisdom of Solomon, xiv. 22, 23.

‡ The words of Sanchoniatho are to be found in the Præparatio Evangelica of Eusebius, p. 38. λοιμου δε γενομενου και φθορας, τον ἑαυτου μονογενη υἱον Κρονος Ουρανῳ πατρι ὁλοκαρπωι: *ac diræ pestilentiæ inclementia exitioque commotus, filium, quem unum ex legitima uxore susceperat, Cœlo patri to-*

Assuming that the superstitious rites of the ancient Ammonites demanded occasionally the lives of their children, we may yet assert, that in later times the act of passing infants through the fire was regarded solely in

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tum flammis consumptum immolat. This version by Vigerus is a paraphrase rather than a translation; and I need not add that his attention in providing Chronus with a legitimate wife is altogether gratuitous.

The savage custom of infanticide, as a religious obligation, seems to be alluded to in the Andromeda of Sophocles:

Νομος γαρ ἐστι τοισι βαρβαροις κρονῳ
Θυπτολειν βροτειον ἀρχηθεν γενος.

"Phœnicum sive Chananæorum, præcipui Tyrii, apud quos vetustissimum fuisse morem immolare puerum ingenuum, docet nos Curtius, qui ait sacrum Carthaginienses a conditoribus traditum usque ad excidium urbis suæ fecisse." Ennius de Pœnis sic scribit:

"Pœni sunt soliti sos sacrificare puellos."

Plato Minoe: ἡμιν μεν ὐν νομος ἐστιν ἀνθρωπους θυειν, αλλ' ἀνοσιον, καρχηδιοι δε θυουσι, ὡς ὁσιον ὐν και νομιμον αυτοις; και ταυτα ἐνιοι ἀυτων ὑιεῖς τῳ κρονῳ ὡς ἐσως και ἀκηκοας.

Justinus ex Trogo de Carthaginiensibus narrat his verbis: "Cum inter cætera mala etiam peste laborarent, cruenta sacrorum religione et scelere pro remedio usi sunt; quippe homines ut victimas immolabant; et impuberes (quæ ætas etiam hostium misericordiam provocat) aris admovebant, pacem Deorum sanguine eorum exposcentes, pro quorum vita dii rogari maxime solent," lib. xviii.

"Mos fuit in populis quos condidit advena Dido
Poscere cæde deos veniam, ac flagrantibus aris,
Infandum dictu, parvos imponere natos."—*Silius Italicus*, lib. iv.

Pescennius Festus in libro Historiarum refert, "Carthaginienses Saturno humanas hostias solitos immolare, et cum victi essent ab Agathocle rege Siculorum, iratum sibi deum putavisse; itaque ut diligentius piaculum solverent, ducentos nobilium filios immolasse."—*Lactantius*, lib. i. c. 31. *Grotii Comment. in Deut. cap. xviii.*

The Carthaginians received their theological dogmas from the Phenicians; the Gauls and their priests, the Druids, appear to have derived their mythology from the same quarter; hence Cæsar informs us, book vi. chap. 14., "Natio omnis est Gallorum, admodum dedita religionibus. Atque ob eam causam, qui sunt affecti gravioribus morbis, quique in prœliis periculisque versantur; aut pro victimis homines immolant, aut se immolaturos vovent; administrisque ad ea sacrificia Druidibus utuntur; quod pro vita hominis nisi vita hominis reddatur, non posse aliter deorum immortalium numen placari arbitrantur. Alii immani magnitudine simulacra habent; quorum contexta viminibus membra, vivis hominibus complent; quibus succensis, circumventi flammâ exanimantur homines."

the light of a lustration, or, perhaps, of an emblematical ceremony. Nor was this Pagan institution confined to the dark ages which preceded the era of the gospel. Traces of it are still discoverable in the names and usages that prevailed among our own ancestors at no very remote period. The Britons and Celts paid due adoration to the principle of fire. On the approach of summer they lighted up the sacred pile in honour of Baal; and, mingling amusement with the traditionary feelings of superstition, the rustics pushed one another into the flames; convinced that they were thereby to secure for themselves health of body, and for their fields and flocks an abundant produce. The feast of Pales, among the Romans, had a similar import. On the twenty-first day of April, the peasants collected a heap of straw and hay, and setting fire to it, leaped through the flames; believing that by such means their sins were expiated and their unworthiness removed.*

The natural and easy change of manners which the

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* Palilia tam privata quam publica sunt apud rusticos; ut cum fœno conjectis stipulis ignem magnum transiliant; his Palilibus se expiari credentes. *Varro apud Scholiasten Horatii.* See Grotius on Deut. xviii. 10., and Jurieu, vol. II. part iv. p. 23.

> Moxque per ardentes stipulæ crepitantis acervos
> Trajicias celeri strenua membra pede.
> Expositus mos est: moris mihi restat imago.
> Turba facit dubium: cæptaque nostra tenet.
> Omnia purgat edax ignis, vitiumque metallis
> Excoquit, idcirco cum duce purgat oves.
>
> *Ovid. Fast.* lib. iv. 781, &c.

It is remarkable, that the same superstition was discovered among the native tribes of South America. Ludovicus Vives relates, that in his time the Spaniards found in a certain part of that continent, to which, he says, they gave the name of Carolina, great brazen statues, hollow within, with the hands joined and stretched, in which the children were put which were sacrificed to those gods, and cruelly burnt alive; a great fire being made under the statue. It is not unlikely, adds Jurieu, that this way of worship spread itself first from Carthage, along the coast of Africa, and was from thence afterwards transmitted to the opposite shores of the new world.

mere lapse of time produces in all countries, suggested an expedient for putting an end to the cruel oblations which idolatry required from the hands of its ignorant votaries. The horrible sacrifice of the first-born on the altar of Moloch, found an instructive and less revolting emblem in the purification of a sacred flame, which did not menace the life. A stag was offered up instead of a virgin; an ox in place of a man; and in Egypt the milder spirit of the national faith was contented with waxen figures, which represented the human victim, who must otherwise have expired before the shrine of the bloody idol. Some even proceeded so far as to teach that the divine anger would be appeased were a torch thrown into the fire, which blazed before the image.

In the Fasti of the Romans, we observe similar changes, dictated by an advancing civilization. The *Lemuria*, for example, which used to be celebrated by throwing thirty old men over the Sublician bridge into the Tiber, had their frightful ritual commuted into as many human effigies, made of rushes; which, in the days of Ovid, were annually precipitated into the river by the hands of the Vestal virgins. The same remark applies to the festival of *Compitalia*,—a service which was performed to the *protecting Lares*, who guarded the public ways; and at which, in the old times, a number of boys was sacrificed to Mania, the fabled mother of these divinities. Junius Brutus had at once the merit of putting an end to this inhuman ceremony, and of satisfying the credulous people that they should, by presenting the *heads of poppy and garlic*, equally fulfil the intention of the gods.*

* Qualem nunc permutationem sacrificii, Prætextate, memoratam, invenio postea compitalibus celebratam; cum ludi per urbem in compitis agitabantur restitui scilicet a Tarquinio Superbo Laribus et Maniæ, ex responso

I have only now to observe, in respect to the worship of Moloch, that, owing to the different forms in which the name is written in the Old Testament, some ambiguity has arisen as to its meaning and application. The reader is aware that Moloch literally signifies king; and hence the Seventy, in translating the second verse of the twentieth chapter of Leviticus, have rendered it as follows:—Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto the Ruler, shall surely be put to death. Ὃς ἂν δῶ του σπερματος αυτου Αρχοντι, θανατῳ θανατουσθω; quicumque dederit de semine suo *principi*, morte moriatur. Theodotion and Symmachus, in like manner, translate the original term מלך into Βασιλεα δ' ἀρχοντα. In the first book of Kings, Solomon is said to have gone after Astaroth, the goddess of the Zidonians, and after *Milcom*, the abomination of the Ammonites.* Here the name given to the idol literally denotes *their king;* and the Septuagint accordingly render it by the words τῳ βασιλεῖ αὐτων, εἰδωλῳ υἱων Αμμων. The Hebrew vocable in this case is מלכם.

Again, in the fifth chapter of the prophecies of Amos, it is thus written. Ye have born the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun, your images, the star of your god which you made to yourselves.† The original term in this sacred book is מלככם, *Molekam*, of which the exact import is *your king*. But in this instance, the Seventy de-

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Apollinis: quo præceptum est ut pro capitibus capitibus supplicaretur; idque aliquamdiu observatum ut pro familiarum sospitate pueri mactarentur Maniæ deæ matri Larum. Quod sacrificii genus Junius Brutus consul, Tarquinio pulso, aliter constituit celebrandum; nam capitibus allii et papaveris supplicari jussit, ut responso Apollinis satisfieret de nomine capitum. —*Macrob. Satur.* lib. i. c. vii.

* 1 Kings xi. 5. There is in this passage a considerable difference in the arrangement of the Hebrew and Greek texts.

† Amos v. 26.

parting from their accustomed rule, do not give a literal translation of the Hebrew; choosing rather to give the meaning of the prophet, than the strict grammatical bearing of his words. *Και ἀναλαβετε την σκηνην του μολοχ, και το ἀστρον θεου ὑμων ῾ραιφαν τους τυπους ἀυτων ους ἐποιησατε ἑαυτοις.*

The prophet Zechariah records a curse against all idolaters, and especially against such as "worship the host of heaven upon the house-tops; and them that worship and that swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham; והנשבעים במלכם."* In the text of the Seventy it is turned thus:—*Και τους προσκυνουντας επι τα δωματα τη στρατια του ὀυρανου, και τους προσκυνουντας και τους ὀμνυοντας κατα του κυριου, και τους ὀμνυοντας κατα του βασιλεως ἀυτων.* Here the Greek interpreters return to their usual practice; and instead of Moloch, or Milcom, or Milcham, translate the Hebrew literally, *του βασιλεως αυτων, their king.*

It is not unworthy of notice, that the Seventy have substituted for Chiun the idol Raiphan, which, according to the orthography of St Luke, must be pronounced Remphan; an Egyptian abomination, representing, like Moloch, one of the principal figures in the heavenly host.† The Israelites are charged with bearing the tabernacle or canopy of this image during the forty years which they spent in the wilderness. Jurieu perceives in this practice, indispensable among a migratory people, the origin of

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* Zephaniah i. 5.

† Those who are desirous to know all that can be said respecting this god, will be amply gratified by perusing the tract of Jablonski, De Remphan ab Israelitis in Deserto, cultu. After much learned labour, he arrives at the following conclusion:—"Erat Remphan idolum Ægyptiorum, in quo ipsi virtutes et beneficia Solis, Deorum suorum maximi, venerati fuisse, censendi sunt. Quis jam non facile concesserit, Ægyptios per nomen quod idolo huic imposuerunt, *Remphan*, i. e. *regis Cæli*, hoc ipsum eleganter expressisse? Habet Cælum exercitus suos, stellas atque sidera, quibus omnibus Veteres cultum decreverunt.—*Jablonski apud Ugol.* vol. xxiii. p. 597.

"Popish processions, who," says he, "seem to have borrowed from the Heathen the custom of carrying in pomp the relics and images of their saints." But the inhabitants of modern Rome are supplied with a more appropriate example in the habits of their pagan progenitors, who, on certain occasions, did exhibit in public the figures of their gods.* It was the opinion of Macrobius, that the idea of such processions must have been borrowed from Egypt, where the priests of Heliopolis were wont to carry about the image of their deity; whom they were pleased to represent as a beardless youth, with a scourge in his right hand, and brandishing a thunderbolt in his left.†

The name of the celebrated author of the Saturnalia reminds me of a verbal mistake into which he is supposed to have fallen regarding the principal idol of Assyria. He states, that the people of the country just mentioned worship, as their supreme divinity, a god whom they call Adad, or ONE; adoring him as the most powerful of all beings. To him they join a goddess named Adargatis; and to these two immortals they attribute the whole power of the universe, meaning by these deities the sun and the earth.‡

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* Extremum pompæ agmen claudebant Deorum simulacra quæ humeris bajulabuntur a viris, eandemque præferebant formam qua finguntur apud Græcos; eundem etiam habitum, eademque insignia; munera item quæ singuli invenisse atque hominibus donasse traduntur; nec solum Jovis, Junonis, Minervæ, Neptuni, aliorumque quos Græci inter duodecim Deos numerant, sed antiquiorum etiam a quibus duodecim illos fabulantur ortos.—*Dionys. Halicarn. ex versione Sylburgii et Gelenii.*

† Simulacrum enim aureum specie imberbi instat dextra elevata cum flagro in aurigæ modum; læva tenet fulmen et spicas quæ cuncta Jovis Solisque consociatam potentiam monstrant. Hujus templi religio etiam divina præpollet, quæ ad Apollinis potestatem refertur qui idem atque sol est: vehitur enim simulacrum dei. Heliopolitani ferculo uti vehuntur in pompa ludorum Circensium deorum simulacra.—*Macrob. Saturnalia*, lib. i. c. 23.

‡ Et ne sermo per singula nomina deorum vagaretur, accipe quid Assyrii de Solis potentia opinantur: deo enim quem summum maximeque veneran-

Selden has adduced several strong reasons to prove that Macrobius must have taken חד *Chad*, or אחד Achad, for חדד Hadad; the former signifying *one*, and the latter a god whose name we find incorporated in Ben-hadad, and other Assyrian appellations. Moloch, we are informed by Sanchoniatho, was among the Phenicians denominated Adod; and there is no one, in the least acquainted with the eastern languages, who does not see how readily, by the mere change of a vowel point, the one word might be substituted for the other. Selden, at the same time, does not deny that the Assyrians had a divinity called ONE; he merely maintains that the term in the original was חד or אחד, and not חדד.* He admits, moreover, that both the epithets were applied to the same idol, the sun; the first denoting his unity, and the other expressing the shout or acclamation uttered by his worshippers, or, perhaps, the wailing of the children who were sacrificed at his shrine as the god of the Ammonites. Hadad autem clamorem seu celeusma hortantium non male denotat, nec a lamentis puerorum in Molochi sacris ita prorsus abludit. Quin et effigies utriusque et Adadi et Molochi easdem fere memorant fuisse scriptores vetusti, et ad unum solem exprimendum fictas.

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tur Adad nomen dederunt. Ejus nominis interpretatio significat UNUS. Hunc ergo ut potentissimum adorant deum; sed subjugunt eidem deam nomini Adargatin; omnemque potestatem cunctarum rerum his duobus attribuunt, Solem Terramque intelligentes, nec multitudine nominum enuntiantes divisam eorum per omnes species potestatem, sed argumentis, quibus ornantur, significantes multiplicem præstantiam duplicis numinis. Ipsa autem argumenta solis rationem loquuntur; namque simulacrum Adad insigne cernitur radiis inclinatis; quibus monstratur vim cæli in radiis esse solis qui demittuntur in terram. Adargatis simulacrum sursum versum reclinatis radiis insigne est; monstrando radiorum vi superne missorum enasci quæcumque terra progenerat.—*Macrobii Saturnalia*, lib. i. cap. 23.

* Quod autem de UNIUS nomine Assyriorum Deo alicui dato scribit Macrobius haud futile prorsus habendum. Erat sane Deus illis ita nuncupatus, id est חד *Chad*, seu אחד *Achad*, sed et forte non ita ab Adado seu

But it is enough that we are hereby supplied with the most satisfactory evidence respecting the foundation of all mythology; and that we are led by the able authors just named to search for the origin of the whole celestial hierarchy in the two great physical principles which secure the perpetuity of nature—the generative and prolific energies. In the first book of the Saturnalia, from the seventeenth to the twenty-third chapters inclusive, Macrobius establishes, from the writings of the philosophers as well as of the poets, that all the gods of Assyria, Egypt, and Greece, were mere personifications of the solar influence; and, moreover, that all their names, however varied, might be resolved into some attribute of the sun.* Ausonius, too, represents this luminary as saying—

Ogygiam me Bacchum vocat:
Osirin Ægyptus putat:
Mysi Phanacen nominant:
Dionyson Indi existimant:
Romana sacra Liberum:
Arabica gens Adoneum:
Lucaniacus Pantheum.

See *Vossius de Idol. Gentili*, p. 37.

The same process of reasoning may be extended to the female divinities; all of whom will be found to merge in

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Molocho alienus; cum Adad per UNUM interpretatur fallit Macrobius; minus ut a vero aberrâret, fieri potest, cum Adad et Unum sive Achad, idem fuisse dicit.—*Selden de Diis Syris.* Syntag. i. c. 6.

* Cave estimes poetarum gregem cum de Diis fabulantur non ab adytis plerumque philosophiæ semina mutuari; nam quod omnes pene deos duntaxat qui sub cælo sunt ad solem referunt, non vana superstitio sed ratio divina commendat. Solem esse omnia et Orpheus testatur his versibus:

Κικλυθι πηλιπορον δινης ἑλικαυγια κυκλον
Ὀυρανιαις στροφαλιγξι περιδρομον αιεν ἑλισσων.
Αγλαι ζιν διονυσι, πατερ ποντου, πατερ αιης,
Ἡλι παγγενετορ, παναιολε, χρυσεοφεγγες.
Ἡλιος θ' ὁς παντ' ἐφορᾳς, και παντ' επακουεις.

that general notion of fecundity, or power of production, which is associated with the qualities of animated nature.

Of the ancient Hebrews we are told not only that they forsook Jehovah and served Baal, but also that they served Astaroth and the groves. The same charge is repeated at the tenth chapter; where it is stated, that the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim and *Astaroth*, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord and served him not.

A small difficulty has arisen from the several ways in which the name of this goddess is written in the original; being sometimes עשתרות; at other times עשתרת; and finally אשרה. The latter form of the word is occasionally rendered *grove;* and then, instead of Baalim and Astaroth, which are usually conjoined in the prohibition, the narrative sets forth that the Hebrews served the "Groves," together with their favourite Baalim, or host of heaven. Perhaps this verbal obscurity might be removed by adopting the hint of Rabbi D. Kimchi, who asserts, that אשרה signifies not only a tree, but every piece of wood that is used for idolatrous purposes. Proceeding on this view, we shall find it more easy to understand why the sacred writers should have employed the term so indiscriminately; applying it both to an idol, and to the clump of growing trees under which the idol was worshipped.

That אשרה, in some parts of the ancient Scriptures, means a grove, and not a wooden image, is perfectly plain from the import of the context. For example, in the twelfth chapter of Deuteronomy, where the Israelites are commanded to destroy all the instruments of idolatry, it is said, "*You shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn* אשריהם *their groves with fire, and hew down*

פסילי אלהיהם *the graven images of their gods;*" where it is obvious, that אשריהם is distinguished both from the pillars and from the graven images of their gods. The same observation applies to Exodus xxxiv. 13.; to Deuteronomy vii. 5.; and xvi. 21.* The expression in the last-mentioned text hardly admits of any doubt. Thou shalt not plant to thyself a grove of any trees אשרה כל עץ near to the altar of Jehovah thy God; for, as Parkhurst remarks, I cannot find that the verb נטע ever denotes the setting up of an idol, but always the planting of a tree or such like.*

But that the term אשרה is used to denote an image or other representation of the Zidonian goddess Astarte, is rendered equally certain by the concurrent testimony of several of the inspired penmen. In the twenty-third chapter of the second book of Kings, for instance, we are told that Josiah commanded Hilkiah the high priest to bring forth out of the temple of the Lord, all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them without Jerusalem, in the fields of Kidron. He likewise put down the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. And he brought out the *Grove* from the house of the Lord, without Jerusalem unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people. And he brake down the

* See Parkhurst's Hebrew Lexicon, voc. אשר, and Selden de Diis Syris, p. 146.

houses of the sodomites that were by the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the *Grove*.*

Every one must perceive that אשרה in these two examples, should have been translated *Asherah*, or Astarte, or the moon, or by any other name usually applied to the consort of Baal. To bring out a "grove" from the house of the Lord, and to grind or stamp it to powder, and to scatter that powder on the surrounding graves of the Gentiles, is an expression which is at once destitute of sense and of congruity. Nor can we see the propriety of weaving hangings for a grove properly so called. The women, therefore, who were employed by the idolatrous priests, must have exercised their taste and industry in embroidering curtains and other drapery for the shrine of the queen of heaven.

In the history of the idolatrous Manasseh, again, it is said, that "he built altars for all the host of heaven, in the two courts of the house of the Lord: And he set a graven image of the *Grove* that he had made in the house of Jehovah. He reared up altars for Baal, and made a *Grove*, as did Ahab king of Israel, and worshipped all the host of heaven and served them."† Following the reference which is here made to the practice of Ahab, we find, that after marrying Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, the king of the Zidonians, he went and served Baal and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal, in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a *Grove*.‡

When we connect these passages together, we find that the Grove which Manasseh made was after the fashion of the one fabricated by Ahab; and that it was the very

* 2 Kings xxiii. 4, 5, 6, 7. † 2 Kings xxi. 3. 5. 7.
‡ 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32, 33.

same Grove which Josiah removed out of the house of the Lord, and took without Jerusalem to the brook Kidron, where he stampt it to powder, and cast the powder of it on the graves of the children of the people.

Nothing more can be necessary to prove, that in all these places, the word אשרה should have been translated into the name of the goddess Astarte, and not by the term Grove. Did we require any other evidence in support of this conclusion, we might draw it from the obvious fact, that a grove, meaning thereby a number of trees sufficiently large to overshadow the rites of an idolatrous worship, could not be *made* on a sudden, and so as to meet the capricious innovations of a superstitious prince. Besides, as Baal and Astarte, the sun and the moon, were the principal divinities of Zidon, we have reason to believe that both were introduced at the same time to the pliant faith of the Hebrews by the daughter of Ethbaal; whence we not unnaturally infer, that, whenever Asherah is associated with Baal in the history of the Israelites, the former of these terms denotes an idol, and not a collection of trees.

For instance, when Elijah gave his celebrated challenge to the worshippers of the false gods, and said unto Ahab, "Now therefore send and gather unto me all Israel, unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the Grove, ונביאי האשרה, four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table," is it not perfectly clear that by the second order of priests here mentioned was meant those who were ordained to the service of Astarte? I know not for what reason the English translators have rendered the Hebrew word just quoted by *groves*, the plural form of the noun, unless it be that, in this particular case, in order to ensure the appearance of consistency, they have chosen to follow the version of the Septuagint; who,

probably thinking four hundred priests too great a number for any one grove, and, finding, moreover, that they were collected together from all Israel, resolved so to multiply the places of worship as to give an air of historical truth to the inspired narrative. Had they seen the matter in its proper light, and represented Asherah as a goddess instead of a plantation, the most literal version would have appeared to them the most suitable and correct.*

The reader of the original Scriptures requires not to be informed, that Ashtaroth עשתרות is the term which is most frequently applied to the female idol now under consideration; and also, that in the common usage of the Hebrew language, it meant a flock of sheep. It is well known that Jupiter or Baal was not unfrequently represented under the figure of a he-goat; and, perhaps, in the word Ashtaroth, there may be some allusion to the prolific qualities of these animals. Bochart seems to have entertained an opinion somewhat similar, when he asserts that Astarte took her name from Ashtaroth, which signifies sheep; because, says he, this goddess is Venus, and presides over the generation of all things, particularly of animals, according to Lucretius:†

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* Και νυν αποστειλον, συναθροισον προς με παντα Ισραηλ εις ορος το καρμηλιον, και τους προφητας της αισχυνης τετρακοσιους και πεντηκοντα, και τους προφητας των αλσεων τετροκοσιους εσθιοντας τραπεζαν Ιεζαβελ.—*Regn.* lib. tertius, cap. xviii. com. 19.

The Septuagint, it will be observed, translate Baal by the word αισχυνης, *shame* or *confusion*.

† Et vero inde dicta Astarte videtur non solum gregibus sed et armentis præfuisse, atque ideo capiti imposuisse βασιλειας παρασημον κεφαλην ταυρου, *tauri caput pro regni insignibus*, ut habit Sanchoniathon. Nempe Astarte est Venus: quod ex eadem Sanchoniathon, ex Cicerone, Theodoreto, Procopio Gazæo, Suida, et aliis probare esset obvium, si hæc res ageratur. Porro de Venere, Lucretius:

—— Per te quoniam genus omne animantum
Concipitur, visitque exortum lumina solis.—Lib. i. v. 4, 5.

Et Manlius, libro secundo, ubi de Cæti signis, quæ sub Deorum tutela sunt,

—— taurum Cytherea tuetur.

——— For by Thee all live;
And living, hail the cheerful light of day.—*Good's Translation.*

Grotius, in like manner, directing his attention to the physical principle which is involved throughout the whole of this mythological system, identifies Astarte with the goddess Earth, who was worshipped in the consecrated groves, and from which אשרות she derived her name עשתרות; for these terms, says he, though they are pronounced differently, have the same signification.*

It belongs to profane mythology rather than to the history of religious opinions among the ancient Hebrews, to account for the constant association of groves and trees with the name of the lunar divinity. In the Æneid of Virgil, this goddess is represented as the guardian of forests as well as the patroness of virtue:

Suspiciens altam Lunam sic voce precatur,
Tu Dea, tu præsens nostro succurre labori,
Astrorum decus et nemorum Latonia custos.—Lib. ix. v. 40.

It is with much propriety, too, that the same poet introduces the Sidonian Dido as preparing the worship of her native idol, in a sacred grove at Carthage:

Lucus in urbe fuit media, lætissimus umbra;
Hic templum Junoni ingens Sidonia Dido
Condebat.—Lib. i. v. 445.

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* In talibus autem lucis Terra colebatur, quæ inde dicta עשתרות, et Græcis res Syras exprimentibus *Astarte.* Is mos sub Cybelis nomine ad Phrygas et gentes alias transiit. Ovidius septimo Metamorphoseon:

Templum Deûm matri quæ quondam clarus Echion
Fecerat ex voto nemorosis abdita silvis.

Sic castum nemus Terræ dicatum a Germanis Tacitus nos docet. Alibi autem meri luci dicati Terræ, alibi addita simulachra ut ovis specie apud Moabitas, narrantibus Rabbinis. Alii Astarten Lunam esse, alii Venerem, alii Junonem conjectant, sed quod dixi maxime credibile est. Tum vero Venus rerum genetrix quod Terræ convenit: et Luna ἀντιχθων veteribus; et Juno aër quæ circa Terram.—*Grotii Annotata ad Lib. Jud.* cap. ii. com. 13.

But how various soever may have been the names and the attributes of Astaroth or Astarte, there can be no doubt that she was adored by the ignorant Syrians as the principle of fecundity in animal nature. In what manner they conducted the worship of this false deity, their authors have not fully nor minutely explained; and the little which is revealed concerning their secret rites, gives no occasion to regret that these have been so imperfectly communicated. It should seem, that the two sexes were wont, not only to disguise their figures in dresses to which they were entirely unaccustomed, but even in some instances to reduce their persons and habits as far as possible to a conformity with their outward appearance. Those who have read the "Syrian Goddess" of Lucian, will understand the allusions now made; while they cannot stand in want of any information respecting the licentious usages at the various temples of that idol, which were deemed necessary to secure the envied blessings connected with her peculiar influence. Her several names were only expressive of so many attributes referable to conception and parturition; and whether she was addressed as Venus, or Juno, or Diana, or Lucina, or Astarte, or Astaroth, her power was invoked as that immortal being whose favour could add to the number of living things.

"As to the Syrian Venus," says Jurieu, "I take her to be the whole frame of nature, and the prolific virtue everywhere diffused in it; wherefore this goddess, according to the testimony of Herodotus, is called Mylitta by the Assyrians, a word which, in their language, signifies generatrix or mother.*" In short, in the mythology of Canaan,

* Critical History of the Doctrines and Worship of the Church, vol. II. part iv. p. 157.

she bears the same relation to Baal, the generating energy, that Isis bears to the god Osiris in the superstition of Egypt; and Isis, as every one knows, was a personification of the earth, or more generally, of female nature at large, particularly when viewed as called into activity by the presence of her consort, the sun.*

When we consider the peculiar form and objects of the Hebrew government, the numerous laws against idolatry, and the severity with which these were sometimes administered, we cannot but be struck with astonishment at the frequent lapses of the children of Israel into the grossest superstitions of the heathen nations. Not contented with the impure rites which they brought with them out of Egypt, they made haste to adopt the most offensive of those which they found established among the Pagan tribes whom they were commanded to extirpate. The power of the more enlightened of their judges was exerted in vain; their pious kings expounded to no purpose the precepts of Jehovah, and destroyed, with becoming indignation, the instruments of their pollution and the scenes of their licentious festivals; even the voice and the arm of the Lord were from time to time revealed in wrath against them, without producing either on their faith or their religious habits any permanent improvement. They persisted in their idolatry with a degree of steadiness which they manifested in no other pursuit; till at length, towards the close of their monarchy, we find them combining, in one scheme of false worship, the superstitions of the Nile, with the Sabaism of Chaldea, and the carnal ceremonies of the seven nations.

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* De Luna idem opinabantur Ægyptii. Matrem Mundi vocitabant, eamque a sole gravidam factam fœcunda generationis principia enixam demittere, utriusque sexus naturam continentem. Plutarchus libro de Iside et Osiride, μητερα την σιληνην του κοσμου καλουσι και υσιν ισχυν αρσενοθηλυν ειναι.

In the eighth chapter of the book of Ezekiel, the prophet is addressed by the Divine Spirit in the following words:—"Son of man, dig now in the wall; and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about. Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, the Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth. He said also unto me, Turn yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was towards the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz. Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house; and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east."*

We have here an outline very clearly traced of the three great systems of idolatry already mentioned. The forms of creeping things and abominable beasts indicate at once their Egyptian origin; and the circumstance of their being pourtrayed upon the wall round about, still more forcibly establishes the same hypothesis. Ammianus Marcelli-

* Ezekiel viii. 8—16.

nus, in reference to the mystic cells of Egypt, makes use of a description which might be almost literally applied to the temple of Jerusalem in the days of Ezekiel. Sunt et syringes subterranei quidam et flexuosi secessus, quos, ut fertur, periti rituum vetustorum adventare diluvium præscii, metuentesque ne ceremoniarum obliteraretur memoria, penitus operosis digestos fodinis per loca diversa struxerunt, et *excisis parietibus, volucrum ferarumque genera multa sculpserunt, et animalium species innumeras, multas quas Hierogliphicas literas appellârunt.**

The ceremony of weeping for Tammuz was not perhaps confined to any one of the oriental nations. The annual lamentation in Egypt, for the loss of Osiris, is evidently the same superstition which is exposed by the prophet Ezekiel; and in Judea, as well as on the banks of the Nile, it was meant to give an expression to the feelings of animal and vegetable nature on the absence of the sun. The door of the gate of the Lord's house, where the women sat bewailing their god, was situated towards the north; and this, says Warburton, because Phenicia, the country from whence the superstition was derived, lay northward from Jerusalem.† But perhaps a better reason will be found for this position, when we reflect that the north was the region of darkness; the enemy whom they dreaded; and the emblem of that power which had gained a temporary ascendency over their beloved Tammuz. Had the idolaters always turned their faces towards the original seat of their religious rites, it is probable that the women at Jerusalem would have looked in a direction exactly opposite to the one described by the prophet; for unless they had means which we possess not for determining the relative

* Amm. Marcel. cap. xxii. sub finem. Edit. Bononiæ, 1517.
† Warburton's Divine Legation, book iv. sect. 6, p. 297, 298.

antiquity of the Egyptian and Phenician mythologies, it may be presumed, that, had they followed the principle suggested by the author of the Divine Legation, they would have uttered their wailings with their faces turned towards the land of Isis and Osiris.*

That the Assyrians and Phenicians worshipped Adonis, no one is ignorant; the very name of the idol אדוני, derived from the Syrian language, proves that they acknowledged him as their sovereign god. The women of Phenicia, too, were not less zealous than those of Jerusalem and Heliopolis in bewailing the retirement of their divinity, as well as in rejoicing at the renewal of his presence and of his strength. It is therefore not surprising, says Selden, that the Jews should have adopted this ceremony from their neighbours, and given the name of Tammuz to the solar deity; more

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* Adonim quoque solem esse non dubitabitur inspecta religione Assyriorum; apud quos Veneris, Architidis, et Adonis maxima olim veneratio viguit quam nunc Phænices tenent. Nam physici terræ superius hemisphærium, cujus partem incolimus Veneris appellatione coluerunt; inferius vero hemisphærium terræ Proserpinam vocaverunt. Ergo apud Assyrios sive Phænices lugens inducitur dea; quod sol annuo gressu per duodecim signorum ordinem pergens partem quoque hemisphærii inferioris ingreditur; quia de duodecim signis zodaici sex superiora sex inferiora censentur; et cum est in inferioribus, et ideo dies breviores facit, lugere creditur dea, tanquam sole raptu mortis temporalis amisso a Proserpina retenta; quam numen terræ inferioris circuli et antipodum diximus. Rursumque Adonin redditum Veneri credi volunt, cum sol evectis sex signis inferioris ordinis incipit nostri circuli lustrare hemisphærium cum incremento luminis et dierum.—Simulachrum hujus deæ in monte Libano fingitur capiti obnupto, specie tristi, faciem manu læva intra amictum sustinens, lachrimae visione conspicientium manare creduntur. Quæ imago præter quod lugentis est, ut diximus, deæ, terræ quoque hiemalis est; quo tempore obnupta nubibus sole viduata stupet, fontesque veluti terræ oculi uberius manant, agri interim suo cultu vidui mœstem faciem sui monstrant. Sed cum sol emersit ab inferioribus partibus terræ, vernalisque æquinoctii transgreditur fines augendo diem: tunc est et Venus læta, et pulchra virent arva segetibus, prata herbis, arbores foliis; ideo majores nostri Aprilem mensem Veneri dicaverunt. Similiter Phryges, fabulis et sacrorum administrationibus immutatis, circa matrem Deûm et Attinem eadem intelligi præstant. Quis enim ambigat matrem Deûm terram haberi?—*Macrob. Saturnal.* lib. i. c. 21.

particularly, as the same yearly rite was observed in Egypt at a time when many of the natives of that country were resident in Judea, and not a few of the Hebrews occasionally sojourned in the kingdom of the Pharaohs. But why Adonis should have been changed to Tammuz, or what is the exact import of the latter term when examined philologically, he admits that he has not been able to discover.*

The obeisance which the worshippers of the sun directed towards the east cannot be misunderstood. Nor does there appear to be any good ground for the objection urged by Parkhurst against the identity of Tammuz and the solar orb, merely because the two rites, which respected the two distinct conditions, so to speak, of the same god, were going on at the same time in different parts of the temple. "The worshipping of שמש or solar light," says he, "is not only distinguished from that of Tammuz, but expressly called a greater abomination:" on which account the learned lexicographer prefers to consider both Adonis and the idol just mentioned, as designed to represent the promised Saviour, the desire of all nations!† But,

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* Sed cur Adonim Tammuz vocarunt non satis scio. Cum tamen Adonis pro sole sumatur, qui tunc maxime suas exercere videtur Aquilonaribus vires denique reparatas, dum Cancrum mense Tammuz peragrat, a mense ad numen an a numine ad mensem translatum nomen videatur. Neque aliud cogitârunt ii qui primum has nænias instituerunt, quam solis accessum et recessum, quem ut amissum nunc lugebant, et renatum lætis excipiebant auspiciis. Ita rudiores olim et qui simpliciorem vitam degebant, prîusquam ab Astronomis leges siderum didicerant.—*Selden*, p. 246.

Nam rudis ante illos nullo discrimine vita
In speciem conversa, operum ratione carebat,
Et stupefacta novo pendebat lumine mundi;
Tum velut amissis mœrens, tum læta renatis
Sideribus, variosque dies, incertaque noctis
Tempora, nec similes umbras, jam sole egresso,
Jam propiore, suis poterat discernere causis.
Manilius, lib. i. *apud Selden.*

† Parkhurst's Heb. Lexicon, under the word תמוז.

for reasons equally good, he might have asserted that Juno Lucina and Juno Opigena must have been different deities; and also that Juno Sospita was a distinct goddess from both the others, in her name as well as in her worship and votaries.

I cannot conclude this chapter, without repeating once more, that the mythology of the ancients comprehends but a small number of gods, and a great variety of names and attributes. Non tanta πολυθεοτης quanta πολυωνυμια; not so many deities as distinct appellations.* All the male gods may be reduced to one, the generative energy; and all the females to one, the prolific principle. In fact, they may all be included in the one great Hermaphrodite, the ἀρρενοθηλυς; who combines in his nature all the elements of production, and who continues to support the vast creation which originally proceeded from his will.†

Εις Ζευς, εις Αϊδης, εις Ηλιος, εις Διονυσος
Εις θεος εν παντεσσι.—*Orphic Frag.*

Ζευς εστι αιθηρ, Ζευς δε γη, Ζευς δ' Ουρανος.
Ζευς τοι τα παντα.—*Euporion apud Bryant.*

The conclusions just stated are supported by the judgment, not only of Macrobius, the most intelligent mythologist of antiquity, but also by that of the ingenious Bry-

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* Marsham's Canon Chron., p. 32.

† Synesius, the bishop of Ptolemais, a great admirer of the doctrines of Plato, did not hesitate to write in the following manner respecting the true God of Israel:—

——————Συ δ' εσσι ριζα
Παρεοντων, προ τ' εοντων,
Μετιοντων, ενιοντων;
Συ πατηρ, συ δ' ἱσσι μητηρ,
Συ δ' αρρην, συ δε θηλυς,
Συ δε φωνα, συ δε σιγα,
Φυσιως φυσις γοωσα.

ant; who, notwithstanding the large share of paradox attached to his system, has done more than any of his contemporaries to place the theology of the East on its proper basis. Many learned men, as he justly observes, have been at infinite pains to class the particular deities of different countries, and to point out which were the same. But they would have saved themselves much labour, if, before they had bewildered themselves in these fruitless inquiries, they had considered whether all the deities of which they treat were not originally the same; all from one source, branched out and diversified in different parts of the world. The nations of the East acknowledged originally but one deity, the sun; but when they came to give the titles of Orus, Osiris, and Cham to some of the heads of their families, they, too, in time were looked up to as gods, and severally worshipped as the solar light. This was practised by the Egyptians: but this nation being much addicted to refinement in their worship, made many subtile distinctions; and supposing that there were certain emanations of divinity, they affected to particularize each by some title; and to worship the deity by his attributes. This gave rise to a multiplicity of gods; for the more curious they were in their disquisitions, the greater was the number of these substitutes. Many of them at first were designed for mere titles; others were derivatives and emanations: all which in time were esteemed distinct beings, and gave rise to a most inconsistent system of polytheism. The Grecians, who received their religion from Egypt and the East, misconstrued every thing which was imported, and added to these absurdities largely. They adopted deities to whose pretended attributes they were totally strangers; whose names they could not articulate nor spell. They did not even know how to arrange the elements of

which the words were composed.* This blindness, in regard to their own theology, and to that of the countries whence they borrowed, led them to misapply the terms which they had received, and to make a god out of every title. But however they may have separated and distinguished them under different personages, they are plainly resolvable into one deity, the sun. The same is to be observed in the gods of the Romans.†

The doctrine now stated may be amply confirmed by the accounts which we find in the writings of the Greeks and Romans themselves, particularly of such of them as had been in Egypt, and studied the mythology of that country. As Bryant remarks, there are few characters which at first sight appear more distinct than that of Apollo, as compared with Bacchus; and yet the department which is usually appropriated to the former, as the sun, namely, the direction of the year and the revolution of the seasons, is by Virgil attributed to the latter, under the appellation of Liber. He joins him with Ceres, and calls them the bright luminaries of the world:

> Vos ô clarissima mundi
> Lumina, labentem cœlo qui ducitis annum,
> Liber, et alma Ceres.‡

It was therefore very unnecessary in the ancients to enter into learned disquisitions about the identity of any god as compared with another; and to dispute whether

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* Analysis of Ancient Mythology, vol. i. p. 381.

† Bryant, p. 283. The same opinion is to be found in the Canon Chronicus of Sir John Marsham. "Plures in Oriente *Joves* est investigare, Græcis Romanisque longe recentioribus, nullus datur hîc locus. Varro trecentos *Joves* introducit: Nos originem quærimus, non multitudinem. Sane omnis de Jove theologia ex Egypto derivata est; nec Jovis solum, sed omnium etiam deorum numina inde petenda sunt. Idololatria a Phœnicibus quidem propagata; sed ab Egyptiis inventa."—Page 33, 34.

‡ Virgil. Geor. lib. i. v. 6.

Jupiter as a title should be preferred to Mars, or Venus to Diana. Some think, says Diodorus Siculus, that Osiris is Serapis; others, that he is Dionusos; others still, that he is Pluto: many take him for Zeus, and not a few for Pan,—"an unnecessary embarrassment," exclaims Bryant, "for they were all titles of the same god."*

Nor had the mother of the deities a shorter list of appellations than Jupiter or Bacchus; for, according to Apuleius, she speaks of herself as follows:—Me primogenii Phryges Pessinuntiam nominant Deûm matrem: hinc Autochthones Attici, Cecropiam Minervam: illinc fluctuantes Cyprii, Paphiam Venerem: Cretes Sagittiferi, Dictynnam Dianam: Siculi trilingues, Stygiam Proserpinam: Eleusinii, vetustam Deam Cererem: Junonem alii: alii Bellonam: alii Hecaten: Rhamnusiam alii: et qui nascentes dei Solis inchoantibus radiis illustrantur Ethiopes, Ariique, priscaque doctrina pollentes Egyptii, ceremoniis me prorsus propriis percolentes, appellant vero nomine Reginam Isidem.†

I have purposely omitted some religious usages which appear to have been peculiar to the Hebrews, such as the consultation of the Divine Will by means of Urim and Thummim; the idolatry of Micah's family; and the incantations of the witch of Endor; because the former of these is explained at considerable length by Dr Prideaux,‡ and because the others will fall under our notice more conveniently in the course of the narrative with which they are specially connected.

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* Analysis of An. Myth. vol. i. p. 386.

† Apulcii Metam. lib. xi.

‡ The Old and New Testament connected, vol. i. p. 156, &c.

The reader who wishes to examine for himself the various subjects treated in the foregoing chapter, will derive much advantage from a careful study of the following authors. To these I need scarcely add the commentators on the Old Testament, and particularly Patrick, Grotius, Calmet, and Leclerc.

Joh. Hen. Maii Dissert. de Kijun et Remphan.
Joh. Georg. Schwabii Dissert. de Moloch et Remphan.
David Milli Dissert. de Beelzebub et Miphlezet.
——————— de Gad et Meni.
Jo. Goth. Lakmacheri Dissert. de Gad et Meni.
Zoch. Benjamin Pochori Dissert. de Simulachris Solaribus.
Jo. Frid. Mayeri Dissert. de Idolo אשרה.
Georg. Fred. Meinhardi Dissert. de Selenolatria.
Daniel Dictzschii Dissert. de Cultu Moloch.
Solomon Deylingii Dissert. de fletu super Tammuz.
Theod. Hasæi Dissert. de voce Astarte.
Farmer on the Worship of Human Spirits.
Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ.
Selden de Diis Syris.
Macrobii Saturnalia.
Gerard Jo. Vossius de Theologia Gentili.
Calmet. Dictionaire Hist. Crit. Chronol. Geograph. et Litteral.
Priestley's Comparison of the Institutions of Moses and of the Hindoos.
Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses.
Banier. Mythol. et Fables des Anciens.
Jurieu's Critical History of Doctrines and Worship.
Caspar Hartzheim Explicatio Gentilium Fabularum.
Joh. Lomeir. De Lustrationibus Veterum Gentilium.
Traité des Ceremonies superstitieuses des Juifs.
Witsius, Ægyptiaca.
Spencer de Legibus Hebræorum Ritualibus.
Gale's (Theoph.) Court of the Gentiles.
Bryant's Analysis of Ancient Mythology.
Sherlock's Dissertations.
Hyde, Veterum Persarum, et Parthorum, et Medorum Religionis Historia.
Maurice's Indian Antiquities.
Allix's Judgment of the Jewish Church.
Cudworth's Intellectual System.
Philon. Judæi Opera.
Just. Martyr. Apologiæ.
Bulli Geo. Opera.
Diodori Siculi Bibliotheca Historica.
Godwyn's Moses and Aaron.
Randolph on the Trinity.
Graves on the Pentateuch.
Michaelis's Commentaries on the Laws of Moses.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE GENERAL HISTORY OF THE HEBREWS FROM THE DEATH OF JOSHUA TO THE REIGN OF SAUL.

As the children of Israel took possession of their several inheritances before the land of Canaan was completely subdued, some of the tribes found themselves compelled, almost immediately after their settlement under their respective princes, to resume arms, either with the view of protecting their borders against the more warlike natives, or of securing sufficient room for the accommodation of their own people.

I have already mentioned the expedition of Simeon and Judah, and the complete success which attended their attack on Bezek, a strong-hold of the southern Canaanites. But the policy adopted by the Israelites at large was equally inconsistent with their own safety, and with the divine precepts in obedience to which they professed to act. They allowed the idolaters whom they were commanded to extirpate, not only to dwell in the land, but to mix with them in the same cities, and even to dispute with them the possession of the most fertile districts. "The children of Benjamin," says the historian, "did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Je-

busites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day. Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Bath-shean and her towns, and Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land."*

Impatient of military restraint, and fatigued with the painful marches and constant warfare which they had to encounter upon emerging from the desert, the Hebrew tribes were desirous to enter into the promised rest, and to realize in some degree the flattering promises which had been made unto their fathers. They contented themselves with a partial and insecure possession of the country to which their hopes had been so long directed; for upon finding that the devoted nations, even after all the victories of Joshua, were still powerful; having large armies yet unbroken, and chariots of iron accounted invincible in the plains; the chiefs of Israel deemed it prudent to abandon for a time the scheme of entire conquest, and rather to receive the submission of the natives, than, by persevering in doubtful hostilities, to drive them to desperate measures.† "It came to pass when Israel was strong that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out:" and we may add, that when the balance of power turned in the opposite direction, the price of forbearance was paid by those who ought to have made themselves absolute masters of the country.

Such a result, indeed, was altogether unavoidable; for "neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among

* Judges i. 21. 27. † Judges i. 19.

them. Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them and became tributaries. Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob; but the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out. Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became tributaries unto them."*

But the children of Dan were inferior to the rest of their brethren, either in respect of power or of good fortune; for, instead of receiving tribute from the district in which their lot was cast, they found themselves unable to keep the field against the warlike Amorites, or even to retain possession of the territory which had been assigned to them by Joshua.† They were compelled to leave the plain, and take refuge in the mountains; whence, as we shall afterwards see, they sent out a band of spies to examine the remoter parts of the country, in search of fields whereon to establish their numerous families, at a distance from their formidable neighbours.

Josephus, who was well acquainted with the history of his people, expresses deep regret that their avidity and impatience upon entering the promised land, deprived them, in a very short time, of nearly all the fruits of their toil and success in war. He complains that they became luxurious and effeminate; devoting themselves entirely to

* Judges i. 29—33. † Judges i. 34, 35.

the pleasing cares of agriculture, or to the keeping of flocks.*

In particular, they appear to have consented to a virtual dissolution of that federal union among their tribes, upon which, it must have been obvious, their whole strength and security depended. The meetings of the general senate were discontinued; the check and superintendence supplied by the constitution of the commonwealth were thought unnecessary or irksome; and every tribe seems to have been willing to regulate its own affairs and to provide for its own defence. As a proof of this, we find that when the Danites retired from a contest with the Amorites, the house of Joseph attacked the victorious natives; but instead of conquering the inheritance of their brethren, in order to maintain the integrity of the republic and to support the rights of one of its weaker members, the sons of Ephraim appear to have drawn the sword on selfish grounds, and from the most mercenary considerations. When they had prevailed over the Amorites, they proceeded no farther than to reduce them to the condition of tributaries.† In a word, as soon as the tribes were placed in their respective inheritances they forgot not only the law of their God, by which they were bound to eschew idolatry in their own persons, and to destroy all the memorials of it among the original inhabitants; but also the leading principles of their national policy, which

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* Και μετα ταυτα προς μεν τους πολεμιους μαλακως ειχον οι Ισραηλται. Της δε γης και των ταυτης εργων επεμελουντο. Των δε κατα τον πλουτον αυτοις επιδιδοντων, υπο τρυφης και ηδονης του κοσμου ωλιγωρουν, και της πολιτειας των νομων ουκετι ησαν ακριβεις ακροαται. Και συνεβαινεν ηδη την αριστοκρατιαν διαφθαρηναι. Και τας γερουσιας ουκ απεδεικνυσαν, ουδ' αρχην αλλην ευδοκιμειαν των προτερον νενομισμενων. Ησαν δε εν τοις αγροις ηδονη του κερδαινειν προσδιδομενοι. Και δια την πολλην αδειαν στασις αυτους παλιν καταλαμβανει δεινη, και προσηχθησαν εις το πολεμειν αλληλοις εκ τοιαυτης αιτιας.—*Flavii Josephi Antiq. Jud.* lib. v. cap. 2. § 7.

† Judges i. 35.

dictated to them the expediency of a general government even in the time of peace, and more especially the observance of a constant and firm coalition in the event of war on any of their borders.

The neglect now mentioned, together with the unrestricted intercourse which subsisted between them and their pagan tributaries, soon showed itself in a total relaxation of morals as well as of religious duty. Not only did they forsake Jehovah and worship Baal and Ashtaroth, but they also gave way to bad example so far even as to pollute themselves with the worst crimes of the heathen among whom they dwelt; of which a memorable and most disgusting instance was exhibited by the men of Gibeah.

Chronologers are by no means agreed respecting the length of the period which is supposed to have elapsed between the death of Joshua and the first servitude under Chusan Rishathaim; some maintaining that it could not be less than ten years, while others assert that it did not exceed two. But were we to form any estimate of that interval by the change of manners which it produced upon the Hebrew people, we should be disposed to conjecture that the process of corruption could not have been completed in so short a time. The Israelites, no doubt, were settled in Canaan more than twenty years before they were deprived of the counsel of their victorious leader; and to his authority, it may be presumed, they would all that time pay suitable deference, as the person whom they had been long accustomed to obey, and to whom they had given a most solemn pledge that they would for ever preserve entire their religious and political fidelity.* During his life, therefore, we may conclude that the Hebrews did

* Joshua xxiv. 16, 17. 23, 24, 25.

not conform to the superstitious practices of the Canaanites. Nay, we are assured that "the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the Elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel."*

Is it probable, then, that in the brief space of two years after the demise of Joshua, the assimilation between his people and the Amorites should have advanced to such a stage, as that the former should fall down and worship the very same idols which they had been taught the most to abhor and avoid? A dark cloud, it is true, hangs over all that portion of sacred history, through which we can discover no more than the varying outline of a few prominent facts; and with respect to chronology, in particular, the most zealous inquirers are known to have concluded their investigations under the conviction that a comparison of probabilities is the highest point to which learned industry can attain in this department. But if we may put any confidence in experience, aided by the study of the general laws of human nature, there is assuredly good ground for adopting the opinions of those who give to the interval between Moses and Othniel the greatest number of years of which the period will admit.

I grant that there is no document in history, whether sacred or profane, upon which we can found an extension of this chronological field. Nay, as far as positive statement is considered, we are rigidly confined to the limits which I have specified in the Preliminary Dissertation. The works of Josephus, as well as those of Demetrius and Eupolemus, have deprived us of every legitimate pretext for conjecture, in regard to the succession and relative distance of

* Judges iii. 7.

the events which compose the annals of the ancient Jews. They, we have reason to believe, had means of authenticating the historical records of the Hebrews, which we do not possess; and as their calculations appear not to have been questioned by those who lived near their times, it would be presumptuous in any modern writer to attempt even to weaken the basis of an authority so long and so well established.

Still it must be acknowledged, that were we, in our conclusions, to be guided solely by the inspired narrative, we should meet with fewer obstacles in extending the boundaries of the period now under consideration. The sacred historian does not specify any number of years as having passed between the death of Joshua and the subjugation of his country by Rishathaim. He merely informs us that the son of Nun died, being a hundred and ten years old, and that they buried him in the border of his inheritance, in Mount Ephraim; and then adds, "and also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers; and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel."* Then follows an account of the defection of the people at large, their relinquishment of the true God, and their service of Baalim and of Astarte.

It is clear from this statement, that not only had Joshua himself passed away, but likewise all the generation who lived with him, and who had witnessed the miracles which were performed under his auspices at Jericho and on the banks of Jordan, before the children of Israel turned from the pure rites of their national faith. Yea, the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and

* Judges ii. 8, 9, 10.

all the days of the Elders that outlived Joshua: and it was not till another generation arose, who were strangers both to the person and miracles of that leader, "who knew not the Lord nor yet the works which he had done for Israel," that idolatry began to creep in and supersede the worship of the great Jehovah. Is it possible that this change could have taken place in the course of two years? Is it within the bounds of probability that, in so short a period, all the Elders who survived Joshua should have died; all the generation who were acquainted with the circumstances that attended the occupation of the promised land should likewise have expired; and even that a new generation, to whom all these things were unknown, should have grown up, deserted their own religion, and habituated themselves to the service of false gods? Is it at all likely that this mighty revolution in knowledge, faith, and manners, should have come to pass in two years; and, moreover, that the people should have arrived in that time at such an enormous pitch of practical idolatry, as to have provoked Jehovah, who is slow to anger and of great pity, to deliver them into the hands of their enemies?

I am aware that several chronologers allow for the interval between Joshua and Othniel not less than ten or eleven years; but in this term is included the government of the Elders who outlived the son of Nun, as well as the anarchy which is supposed to have followed upon the demise of these latter worthies. Whatever portion of the ten years is to be assigned to the venerable men who continued the government of Joshua, the remainder cannot but seem much too short for the important events which must have preceded the invasion of Chusan Rishathaim; and especially for the religious apostacy which paved the way for that signal chastisement at the hand of the Meso-

potamian monarch. If, therefore, we were at liberty to make any addition to the period between the exode and the foundation of Solomon's temple, I should be inclined to insert a number of years immediately before the commencement of the first servitude; the deliverance from which, under Othniel, fixes the date at which the government by Judges took its rise among the Hebrews.

All our commentators have agreed to follow Josephus in placing the story of the Levite, and the expedition of the Danites, in the time of the anarchy; that is, between the demise of Joshua and the administration of Othniel. They happened, we are assured, when there was no king or governor in Israel, and when every man did that which was right in his own eyes; and perhaps there is no period in the annals of this remarkable people, to which the characteristic description of the inspired penman will be found to apply with more exactness.

The portion of sacred history which is occupied with the details of Micah's idolatry, is more interesting for the view which it exhibits of the state of society in those ancient days, than on account of the simple defection of a family of Israel from the worship of Jehovah.

There was a man of mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah. And he said one day to his mother, The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from thee, and about which, in mine hearing, thou utteredst such imprecations, are in my custody; I took them. And his mother said, May the Lord bless thee, my son! So he restored to his mother the eleven hundred shekels; upon which she said, This silver I had entirely dedicated to the Lord, on my son's account, to be made a carved image and a molten image; therefore to thee I now return it. But he gave back the money unto his mother; and she took two hundred shekels of the silver, and gave them to a

founder, who made thereof a carved image and a molten image, which were placed in the house of Micah. Thus the man Micah had a house of God; and he made an ephod, and teraphim, and initiated one of his sons, who became his priest, or the guardian of his little shrine.*

The sacred establishment of this Ephraimite was soon afterwards completed by the arrival of a young man from Bethlehem-judah; who, being a descendant of Levi, and accustomed, we may presume, to the spiritual duties of his tribe, was appointed to the charge of the silver images, the ephod and the teraphs.†

The Danites, at that period, having been driven by the Amorites from the low country into the mountains, found it necessary to go in quest of a more secure inheritance; and, in pursuance of this object, they sent five men of their tribe to go through the land and examine it. In the course of their progress, they came to mount Ephraim, where, hearing of the young priest who dwelt with Micah, they applied to him for divine counsel in regard to the issue of their expedition. Go in peace, was his answer; the Lord is with you in the way wherein ye go.‡

The five men departed and went to Laish or Leshem;§ and finding the inhabitants living in affluence and security, after the manner of the Zidonians, and being at a great distance from any other settlement of their countrymen who might give them aid in the event of a sudden attack, they returned to their brethren, the Danites, and urged them to an immediate invasion of so rich a district. And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good; and are ye still? Be not slothful to go, and to enter to possess

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* Judges xvii. 1—6.
† Judges xvii. 7, 8, 9, 10.
‡ Judges xviii. 1, 5.
§ Joshua xix. 47.

the land. When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land: for God hath given it into your hands; a place where there is no want of any thing that is in the earth.*

Josephus relates, that the country upon which the Danites on this occasion determined to seize, lay in the neighbourhood of mount Libanus, near the fountains of the lesser Jordan, and at the great plain of Sidon.†

Having equipped six hundred of their men with weapons of war, the chiefs of Dan proceeded to surprise the inhabitants of Laish. Their first encampment was at Kiriath-jearim, in Judah; hence that place was long afterwards called Mahaneh-dan, the camp of Dan. They next passed on to mount Ephraim, and came to the residence of Micah; where the five men who had been formerly sent to explore the country, said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there are in these houses an ephod and teraphim, and a carved molten image? now therefore consider what ye have to do. Upon this they turned towards the dwelling of Micah, and inquired for the young Levite who acted as priest: And while the six hundred men stood without under arms, the five spies entered into the house, and brought out the images, the ephod and the teraphim, which they had resolved to place in their new inheritance. The Levite, thinking it more honourable to be the priest of a whole tribe than of a single family, gave his assent to this fraudulent act; and when Micah ventured to remonstrate with the marauding Danites on this unbrotherly treatment, they contented themselves with reminding him that his life was in their power, and that complaint and resistance were equally unavailing. And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard

* Judges xvii. 8, 9, 10. † Antiquities, book v. chap. 3.

among us, lest angry fellows run upon thee, and thou lose thy life, with the lives of thy household. And when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned, and went back unto his house.*

The success of the expedition answered their fullest expectations. They found the people of Laish secure and careless, unsuspicious of danger, and far removed from help. The Danites smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire; upon the ruins of which, it is added, they built a town, to which they gave the name of Dan, in memory of their forefather, one of the sons of Israel. Having so far accomplished their object, they proceeded to crown their exertions by an act of idolatry. They set up in their new city the graven image of Micah, which continued there all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests unto the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land.†

In this interesting story we perceive one or two steps in that progress towards idol-worship which so soon disgraced and demoralized the whole house of Israel. The religious service contemplated by the mother of Micah was not meant to supersede the adoration which was due to Jehovah. It was not even regarded as inconsistent with the obedience which she professed to the law of Moses, nor with the firmest belief in the divine origin of that wise economy.

But Shiloh, where the tabernacle was placed, was at a considerable distance from mount Ephraim; the road was infested with violent men, who lay in wait to rob the traveller; and, perhaps, in those unsettled times, the service

* Judges xviii. 25, 26. † Judges xviii. 29, 30, 31.

of God, even at the seat of the holy ark, was not regularly performed.* It was therefore a feeling of piety in the heart of the old woman which suggested to her the dedication of the eleven hundred shekels of silver. Her molten image and her carved image, were probably meant as an imitation of the cherubim which overshadowed the mercy-seat; and the ephod which was prepared for the officiating Levite was made after the fashion of the high priest's robes; and these were formed after a pattern prescribed by Heaven itself.†

But the furniture of this "house of gods" was not all so pure nor unobjectionable. The teraphim, as well, perhaps, as the molten image, gave ample evidence that the family of Micah could not lift up their thoughts to Jehovah, without the use of a species of devotional apparatus which was more frequently appropriated to the service of demons.‡ The Danites, too, showed themselves not less inclined than the mother of Micah to combine with the worship of their own God the rites of pagan superstition. Not satisfied with consulting the priest of the carved image, who gave to them an answer as if dictated by inspiration, they carried him and his idols to the city which they were about to build; and thereby perpetuated, during several generations, the abominable mixture of a divine and a spurious faith.

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* Nimirum quia publicè sacerdotis officio non fungebantur, per culpam aut loca infesta latrociniis, existimavit Michas, vel privata religione Deum sibi colendum. Colebat enim verum Deum יהוה.—*Grotius. in loc.*

† Exod. xxix. Levit. viii.

‡ Malè cultum Dei veri et idolorum, seu dæmoniorum, miscuit hic Micha. Ephod enim et Levitam, de quo, eodem capite, Deo vero procul dubio, teraphim et conflatilia quæ fuerunt alia, dæmoniis sacravit. A quibus tanquam a Deo optimo maximo etiam oraculum impetrârunt Danitæ, ut sequenti capite patet. Nec fidem τῷ Ephod quod ad Deum retulere, nec τοῖς Teraphim dæmoniorum seorsum habuere Idolatræ: ideo utraque consulenda, divino cultu utraque suscipienda perperam duxêre.—*Selden De Diis Syris*, p. 19.

It is said that Jonathan and his descendants continued to be the priests of this false god until the day of the captivity of the land. A plain reader of Scripture would certainly infer, from this notice, that the idolatry of the Danites was not quite extirpated until they were carried away by the army of the Assyrians; and several learned commentators have supported, by able arguments, this very natural impression. To suppose that the "*captivity of the land* had an allusion to the capture of the ark by the Philistines, is to found an opinion, respecting a fact, on a literal expression taken in a figurative sense. The loss of the ark in the field of battle is nowhere called the captivity of the *land;* for the reference to this event, in the seventy-eighth psalm, which is usually quoted in support of the conclusion just mentioned, conveys nothing more than the assurance that the Lord forsook the tabernacle in Shiloh, the tent which he had pitched among men; and delivered his *strength* into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand. But as a minute examination of the reasonings of commentators and biblical critics would prove incompatible with the particular object before me, I shall hold it sufficient on this occasion to direct the learned reader to a note extracted from the works of the celebrated Leclerc.*

* Duplicis autem captivitatis, quâ Danitæ Jordanis accolæ solum mutare coacti fuerint, aut certe cogi potuerint, mentio fit in scriptura. Prior est migratio facta jussu Thiglathphileseri, qui Nephthalitidem, Galahitidem et Galilæam invasit, earumque regionum incolas captivos in Assyriam abduxit, 2 Reg. xv. 29. Cum vicini omnes abducerentur, non est credibile Danitas migrationis immunes fuisse. Quod si evaserint eo tempore, non evaserunt captivitatem Salmaneseri, quæ aliquanto post contigit, et decem Israeliticas tribus complexa est. Vide 2 Reg. xvii. 6, &c. Alterutram harum captivitatum spectari necesse est, nulla enim alia captivitas Danitis Jordanis minoris accolis contigit, ut satis liquet, ex Historiæ Sacræ silentio. Nec quidquam huic sententiæ, quod sit alicujus ponderis, objici video.

Aiunt quidem credibile non esse Samuelem, Davidem, et Salmonem, initio regni, simulacra Danitarum non sustulisse; nam postea sub Salmone

In regard to the images which were set up in the chapel of Micah I must refer to the expositors, whose opinions on this subject are so various that it would require much time to collect and compare them. As to the number of these idols, even, there is no approach to unanimity; for while some maintain that there were four, others insist that there were but two. The molten image and the graven image are supposed to mean the same thing; and the teraphim, again, are, by several authors of great reputation, identified with the two former. The latter opinion is advocated by Grotius and Lyra, who assert not only that the statues and the teraphim were the same in form, use, and substance, but that the molten and carved figures were not idols at all; being merely the altar, the candlestick, and such other instruments as were prepared by the mother of Micah for the worship which she had established.*

The first mention that occurs of teraphim, represents them as the gods of Laban, from whose house they were carried away by his youngest daughter. That the word denoted nothing more than images in general, may be certainly inferred from the numerous senses in which it is used by the sacred writers. It is applied, not only to the little figures which Rachel stole, and to the work of the founder who dwelt upon mount Ephraim, but also to the statue as large as life, which the spouse of David placed in a bed, to deceive the messengers who were sent by Saul to lay hold of her husband. It is even used to express idolatry in its widest acceptation. When Samuel, for instance, un-

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idolatra, et regibus Israelis coli ea potuisse nemo negat. Sed non mirum esset, si in ultimo Septemtrionis angulo neglecta fuisset urbis unius, non magni momenti, idololatria, quæ forte tum obscurior fuit.—*Joh. Clerici Comm. in Jud. cap. xviii.*

* Sculptilia autem et fictilia erant altaria, candelabrum, aliaque ejusmodi minuta, vice magnorum quæ erant in Sanctuario.—*Grot. Annot. in Jud. xviii.*

dertook to place before the king just named, the enormity of the crime of which he had been guilty in disobeying the command of God in respect to the Amalekites, he declared that "*that stubbornness was as the sin of the Teraphim.*" It is in the same extensive acceptation of the term that we shall find the meaning of the prophet Zechariah, when he relates that *the Teraphim have spoken vanity and delivered false oracles.*

But the variety of import attached to this ancient appellation is still farther illustrated by the several views which have been taken of its meaning by the Seventy translators. In some cases they merely give the Hebrew phrase in Greek letters; adopting the singular or plural form of the noun, according to the circumstances of the narrative. In the story of Laban, however, they render teraphim by the word *εἴδωλα*; in that of David, whose safety depended on the substitution of this idol, they prefer *κενοταφια*, which signifies an empty coffin or tomb; in the description of the Babylonian monarch given by Ezekiel, they translate teraphim into *γλυπτα*; in the denunciation of Hosea, they interpret what they conceived to be the mind of the prophet by using *δηλοι*, *revealers*; and, finally, in the predictions of Zechariah, they give the import of the same original expression by selecting the Greek word *ἀποφθεγγομενοι*, denoting *such oracles as utter distinct or audible sounds.**

* See Gen. xxxi. 30. 1 Samuel xix. 13. Ezekiel xxi. 21. Hosea iii. 4. Zech. x. 2.

The following description given by Jurieu, after Rabbi Eliezer, is perhaps fitter for a note than for the more prominent reading of the text. It relates to the manner in which the teraphim was supposed to be prepared. "They killed the first-born of a family, and, cutting off his head, did embalm it with oil and salt; then they engraved the name of some evil spirit upon a plate of gold, and, putting it under the tongue of the embalmed head, fastened the same in a wall; and then appearing before it with lamps and worshipping it, the head spoke to them." Hence it is that the teraphims are said to have spoken; according as it is written, *The teraphims have spoken vanity.* And

With respect to the form of the teraphim, we derive very little assistance from the labours of the modern Jews; who, in their writings, appear desirous to combine with the whimsical traditions of their fathers, the most absurd conjectures that their own imaginations can frame. Aben Ezra, Solomon Jarchi, the Rabbi David Kimchi, and Tostatus, seem to entertain a notion that the idols now spoken of were metallic figures bearing some resemblance to the human being; which, if they were made at the proper season, under certain aspects of the constellations and conjunctions of the planets, had communicated to them, by these celestial bodies, such a degree of virtue as enabled them to give answers to those who consulted them respecting futurity.*

The reader will probably agree with Calmet, that, amidst so much discrepancy of opinion, any attempt to describe the teraphim might be justly charged with temerity. It may, however, be presumed, that, in many cases, they must have exhibited a considerable resemblance to the cherubim which encompassed the ark of the covenant; the origin of which, as well in name as in object, may probably be traced to the same conceptions of the divine nature that suggested the less regular forms upon which Rachel and the parent of Micah set so much value. Without yielding too readily to the judgment of Kircher, who maintains that the whole of this superstition was derived

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for this reason it was that Rachel did steal them, for fear they should discover to Laban what way Jacob had taken; as also to extirpate idolatry out of her father's house. Jacob, who knew nothing of the matter, said, *With whomsoever are found the teraphim, let him not live*; which, coming from the mouth of a just man, is like what comes from an angel, which was the occasion of Rachel's death in childbed not long after.

* Fictas eas ab Astrologos ut futura prædicerent, sentit R. D. Kimchi: et humana forma factas, ita ut vi cælestis influentiæ essent capaces, adnotat Abraham Aben-Ezra theologus et astrologus maximus.—*Selden*, Syntag. i. p. 17.

from Egypt, we cannot but allow that there is much plausibility in the arguments of those who have undertaken to prove that the worship of the teraphim could not have originated among a people who used only the Hebrew tongue. The Rabbis are unanimous in declaring that the name of this idol is a stranger to their language; and that it must have been borrowed from a nation to whom the rites of Serapis were familiar. Kircher even goes so far as to assert that the servants of the patriarch Abraham, who followed him into Egypt, and attended him during his residence in the kingdom of Pharaoh, must have carried back with them, into the land of Canaan, the idolatry to which they had become accustomed while living among strangers; and that, from the household of the father of the faithful, it must have passed into that of Laban. The same opinion appears to have been entertained by Abenephius. But these writers have not adduced any facts in proof of their hypothesis; on which account their opinion must rest on the mere probability that may seem to arise from the resemblance of the superstition in the two countries, and the historical notice of the ancient intercourse which subsisted between their inhabitants.*

It is well known that Spencer believed the teraphim to be the same with the Urim and Thummim. He supposed

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* Serapidum cultu in Egypto vigente contigit, ut Abrahamo ibi commorante, domestici ejus Egyptiis commixti; cum multa alia, tum maxime Serapides hosce, quos mira Egyptiis patrare videbant, admirarentur et suspicerent: siquidem dæmone eos animante, varia consulentibus et interroganti-bus responsa dabant, felicitatemque eorum cultoribus in omnibus spondebant actionibus. Curiositate itaque ne felicitates participandæ desiderio instigati Hebræi Abræ vernaculi, subito ad hosce Egyptiorum cultus animum adjecerunt. Abrahamo vero in patriam redeunte, servi, comparatis idolis et imaginibus dictis, reduces in patriam suam facti, conceptos in Egypto errores paulatim disseminantes apud Chaldæos et Babylonios mox ingentem exacrabilium Deorum sobolem pepererunt. Eas imagines quas Egyptii Serapes, illi (ס aut ש in ת mutato) תרפים appellarunt.—*Kircher Œdip. Egyp. apud Spencer.*

that the former were small figures, resembling a little child, enclosed in the breast-plate of the high priest; and that, when the pontiff was consulted on any matter of public interest, an angel animated the little puppet, which was thereby qualified to give an audible answer. Dicam verbo, asserit hypothesis mea, Deum e pectorali voce formata respondisse, mediante simulachro præsentia angelica animato, et in hominis forte speciem efficto; utpote organo, quo nullum ad vocem formandam vel præsentiam illam indicandam magis aptum et decorum, aut oracula tradendi modo in sancto sanctorum usitato magis conforme fingi potest.*

This very familiar view of an important question has been treated with ridicule, not altogether unmerited, by an author who yet approves of the general conclusion on which it is founded. "Most rational," says Geddes, "is the opinion of Spencer, that the Urim and Thummim were little images or *teraphs*, and that the idea was borrowed from the Egyptians. From Ælian, indeed, we learn that the Egyptian priests were at the same time judges; and that the arch-priest wore about his neck an image of sapphire stone called TRUTH, (ἀλήθεια,) the very word which is used by the Septuagint and Jerome to express the Hebrew *Thummim*. Whether the high priest of the Hebrews wore two figures, one representing *knowledge*, the other *integrity*, or whether, as Spencer thinks, they were but one figure, is a matter of controversy; but that they were figures, or a figure, of some kind, appears clear, from a passage of Hosea: "The children of Israel shall be many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod,

* Spencer De Legib. Heb. Ritualibus, lib. iii. c. 3.

and without teraphim;" where the teraphs or teraphim are equivalent to the Urim and Thummim of Exodus. The history of Micah leads to the same conclusion: for, whether we suppose that his teraphs were made for an idolatrous purpose or not, it is clear that they were an imitation of the high priest's garniture; and that the teraphim in his case, as well as in Hosea, are equivalent to the Urim and Thummim."*

That the teraphim did not differ from the Urim and Thummin, has been inferred with the greatest show of truth, from the passage just quoted out of the prophet Hosea; where, among all the other instruments of sacred worship, and the external manifestations of the divine presence, no mention is made of the mystical symbols

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* Geddes's Critical Remarks on Exodus. The observation of Ælian above alluded to is as follows:—Δικασται δε, το ἀρχαιον, παρ' Αιγυπτιοις, ἱερεις ἠσαν. Ἠν δε ταυτων ἀρχων ὁ πρεσβυτατος και ἐδικαζεν ἁπαντας. Εδει δε αυτον ειναι δικαιοτατον ανθρωπων και ἀφειδεστατον. Ἐχε δε και ΑΓΑΛΜΑ περι τον αυχενα, ἐν σαπφειρου λιθου, και ἐκαλειτο ἀγαλμα ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ.—*Var. Hist.* lib. xiv. c. 33.

The remark of Abenephius, to which reference is made in the text, is given in these words by Kircher:—"Erant autem simulachra quædam pueri specie, quæ vocabantur nomine Egyptiaco SERAPIS; hæc adorabant illi, de futuris et absconditis ea interrogantes. Omnibus in locis celebrioribus urbium collocabant, adolentes ante ea, secum quoque ea contra eventus malorum portare solebant. Atque hæc idola similia sunt TERAPHIM, quæ Israelitæ colebant, et quæ Laban adorásse Scriptura memorat; et dicitur, quod domestici Abraham in Egypto commorantes, ea secum reduces attulerunt. Atque ex his colligitur, has Hebræorum *teraphim* nihil aliud fuisse quam *Serapes* Egyptiorum, cum non duntaxat nomine, sed forma, ritibusque queis colebantur hujus modi idola in omnibus sibi exacte correspondeant.

Ludovicus De Dieu, in his annotations on the 31st chapter of Genesis, expresses nearly the same opinion. Fortase *teraphim* angelorum fuerunt imagines, aut angelis dicatæ. Unde spiritus angelicus eas subibat, ac consulentibus per eas oracula edebant. Ex hac conjectura תרפים mihi quidem esset quod שרפים, notissimum angelorum nomen.

Gafferellius, quoted by Spencer, appears to think on this subject not very differently from Kircher and Abenephius. "Theraphim figuras fuisse a Mose legislatore permissas, a Labane aliisque Orientalibus ante legem pie usurpatas, quibus mediantibus, voluntatem suam Deus non raro patefecit; et cherubinorum et seraphinorum figuras fuisse generis ejusdem."

which adorned the robe of the high priest, and which gave to the rulers of Israel a knowledge of the future. Presuming that which was employed for a purpose so extremely important in the Mosaical economy, and so indispensable in completing the sacerdotal establishment among the Jews, could not be omitted in the list of privations with which the prophet threatened his rebellious countrymen for their numerous defections, St Jerome has followed the Seventy in the opinion, that by the teraphim in Hosea must have been meant the Urim and Thummim. The latter, accordingly, as has been already observed, have translated teraphim by the word δηλοι, with a distinct allusion to the emblems worn by the high priest on his breastplate: for which reason, as well as from finding that Aquila and Theodotion supported a similar hypothesis, the learned commentator just named has given the weight of his authority to the same side; and admitted, with these celebrated scholars, that the prophet must have intended to menace his people with the total discontinuance of the divine oracle.

The argument of Spencer, for the identity of the Mosaical emblems with those alluded to by the prophet Hosea, has its main dependence upon the interpretation of Jerome. The holy seer is supposed to have used the word teraphim in a good sense; and not as implying that the children of Israel had been so long accustomed to idols that the loss of them was to be regarded as a punishment inflicted by Heaven: and viewing the prophetical denunciation as confined to the withdrawal of the most valuable pledge of the Divine favour, it was not without much appearance of reason that the author of the learned work on the Ritual Laws of the Hebrews concluded, that Hosea could have no other images in his contemplation than those which composed the Urim and Thummim.

Jurieu, supporting himself upon the conjectures of the more modern Rabbis, maintains that the prophet employed the word teraphim in a bad acceptation, and as really denoting idols which were formed for the purposes of idolatry; and, on the ground of this assumption, he does not hesitate to assert, that Hosea foretold to the Hebrews that a time was coming when they should neither worship the true God according to his ordinances, nor offer up their obeisance to any false divinity whatever. In short, the Jews imagine that the prophet had in his eye the condition to which they are reduced at the present moment; when they have neither sacrifice nor altar, ephod nor image consecrated to Jehovah, nor even any religious usages connected with idolatry.*

But whatever obscurity may attach to this inquiry, there can be no doubt, I think, that all the instruments of worship mentioned by Hosea must have belonged to the service of the true God; it being somewhat inconsistent with reason to suppose that, as a part of the punishment denounced against the Israelites for revolting from Jehovah and betaking themselves to idols, they were in future times to be kept free from the sin of idolatry. The visitation usually inflicted upon the disobedient tribes was of quite a different nature. They were allowed to indulge in their wickedness until it had redounded to their pain and shame. "As they did not like to retain God in

* "The prophet," says Rabbi D. Kimchi, "gives us a true picture of the time of the captivity wherein we now live. We are without a king, being subject to the government of the kings and princes of the nations. We have no sacrifices to offer to the true God; neither any statue nor idol set up in honour of the supposititious ones. We are without the holy Ephod, to foretell us future accidents by Urim and Thummim; as also without teraphims consecrated to the idols, who instruct those that confide in them in what is likely to befall them. This is the state of our captivity."—*Kimchi in Hoseam*, cap. iii. 1.

their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind."* The law of the divine government on this head seems to have been expressed in these emphatical terms:— "Ephraim is joined to his idols: let him alone." We cannot, therefore, admit the reasoning of Jurieu, which represents the Almighty as punishing idolatry by removing from the infatuated transgressors every opportunity of committing the sin.

The theory of Spencer, on the other hand, is not without its peculiar difficulties. The pious mind is not easily reconciled to the notion that the sacred symbols through which the Deity made known his will to the chosen people, were borrowed from the practice of an idolatrous nation. On this point Jurieu expresses a sentiment which could not fail to be very generally felt, should the doctrine which he opposes ever happen to be pressed upon the belief of the multitude. "That the teraphims were little images of human shape which delivered their oracles among the Pagans, the same is not improbable, as we shall see anon. But to assert that God did imitate this abomination, and that the Urim and Thummim were images of the teraphim put into the breast-plate of the priest, savours all over of impiety. If there is any thing in the teraphims of Paganism which has any relation to what was practised by the law of God, there is much more reason to imagine that the Devil should imitate God, than that God should imitate the Devil. I wonder how it could enter into the thought of any man that God by this method should authorise the magical abominations of the Pagans, who have constantly made use of these little images in their sorceries."†

* Romans i. 28.

† Jurieu's Critical History of the Doctrines and Worship of the Church, vol. ii. p. 88, 89.

Jurieu is himself of opinion that the teraphims were the *Dii Penates*, or household gods of the ancient Hebrews, as well as of their idolatrous descendants in later times. The chief authority for this notion is taken from the history of Laban, who described the images which his daughter had carried away as *his* gods; it being supposed that had these idols been an object of worship to the whole people of the land, the flight of Jacob with so precious a treasure would have called forth the resentment of the inhabitants at large. It is, no doubt, extremely probable that the teraphim secreted by Rachel were not the gods of the tribe, but merely of her father's family; and that they were viewed by the simple shepherd of Mesopotamia in the light of domestic protectors, as also, perhaps, of memorials fitted to recall to mind the virtues and affection of his progenitors. Nor do I allow much weight to the objection of Calmet, who asserts that the institution of household gods was unknown at so early a period. The history of that species of superstition is much too obscure to be employed as an argument against an hypothesis, which has at least the countenance of a few facts, not unfairly interpreted, to strengthen its foundations.

Nor is the opinion of Jurieu at all inconsistent with the doctrine of Spencer; for the latter believed that the teraphim used in forming the oracular appendage to the high priest's robe were perfectly familiar to the Hebrew people, and that it was even for this very reason that Moses did not think it necessary to give a minuter description of the Urim and Thummim. But the objection which respects the indecorum of the implied imitation remains undiminished, and as this is a matter of feeling rather than of reason, I shall not occupy more time in determining its validity. In a word, the principal difficulty of this

question will be removed by taking, as I have already suggested, the teraphim for images in general; and then to limit the precise import of the expression in every particular instance, according to the subject and obvious bearing of the narrative.

In the case before us, which has suggested these remarks, the images which the children of Dan abstracted from the house of Micah, were obviously of sufficient number and variety to constitute a full sacerdotal establishment; and may therefore be supposed to have represented the cherubs which encompassed the ark, as well as the figures, if there were any such, that were usually attached to the ephod. At all events, the Danites in their remote district at the fountains of Jordan, appear to have been satisfied with their scanty means of worshipping God; for, till the captivity of the land, they repaired not either to Shiloh or to Jerusalem to join their brethren of Israel in the more public service of the national sanctuary.

During the anarchy which succeeded the administration of the Elders, another event took place, which, though of a strictly personal nature in its origin, failed not to involve the whole Hebrew nation in discord and calamity. The story of the Levite, and of the inhumanity to which his wife fell a victim at Gibeah, is recorded both by Josephus and the sacred historian in terms so particular as to prove that the circumstances of the case must have been preserved among the Jews by a very perfect tradition. The affecting appeal which the injured man made to the twelve tribes, combined with the atrocity of the deed which they were called upon to punish, produced in the Israelitish commonwealth a degree of unanimity, by which, after the death of Joshua, their measures appear not once to have been animated.

Determined to bring the perpetrators of so hideous a

crime to justice, the princes of the assembled tribes sent messengers to Gibeah, demanding that the persons of the guilty individuals should be forthwith delivered up to them. The Benjaminites refused to comply; and, yielding to the impulse of wounded pride, or of an unjust resentment, they mustered their forces and declared their resolution to protect the criminals. The army collected at Gibeah did not exceed twenty-six thousand men; but having the advantage of the ground, which was hilly and inaccessible, or being greatly superior to their adversaries in the art of war, the children of Benjamin gained a double victory over a host of four hundred thousand combatants; of whom, in the two battles, they put forty thousand to death. A third engagement ensued, in which the combined tribes, adding stratagem to their overwhelming force, acquired so complete a mastery over the defenders of Gibeah, that they not only burned their town, but from twenty-six thousand reduced their number to six hundred fighting men, who fled into the wilderness to seek shelter in the rock or fortress of Rimmon.*

The obstinate conduct of the Benjaminites, in resisting the application of the general senate, had driven the latter body to a resolution which savoured much more of revenge than of political wisdom. To excommunicate or extirpate the refractory tribe, the Hebrew chiefs bound themselves by an oath that they would not give their daughters in marriage to the sons of Benjamin. But the miserable condition to which their recent defeat had reduced these insurgents, awakened the pity of the conquerors; and, unwilling that the name of one of their ancestors should be blotted out from the earth, they adopt-

* Judges xx. 1—17. 29—46.

ed two expedients whereby they might at once preserve their oath inviolate, and minister to the necessities of their brethren, who had already left the rock, and made their peace with the confederated tribes.*

Finding that the people of Jabesh-Gilead had not obeyed their summons to join the common cause against Gibeah, they sent twelve thousand men to put that place to military execution; with orders to exempt from the general massacre such young women only as were marriageable, and fit to be given as wives to the Benjaminites. The detachment returned to the camp with four hundred virgins, who were disposed of agreeably to the scheme devised by the wisdom of the Senate; but as the men amounted to six hundred, all of whom appear to have been inclined to repair the calamity which had befallen their house, it was necessary to provide two hundred young women more, in order to accomplish this desirable object.†

To supply this deficiency, the Elders of Israel suggested to the vanquished Benjaminites an act of gentle violence, by which they might fully re-establish their domestic relations, and repair the loss of their tribe. "Behold," said they, "there is a feast of the Lord in Shiloh yearly, in a place which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah. Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards: and see, and, behold, if the

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* Judges xxi. 1—8. † Judges xxi. 8—18.

Hæc quoque fuit nefanda laniena, quæ nullo colore defendi queat. Si enim voto illo quod חרם *cherim* dicitur, devoverunt Jebusitas ad internecionem, virginibus parcere non potuissent; nec sane quando jusjurandum conceperunt, cogitabant de virginum exceptione, cum ne impuberibus quidem pepercerint.—*Clerici Commen. in Jud. xxi.* 10.

daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin."*

The stratagem succeeded, and the maids of Shiloh were entrapped by their desolate kinsmen; who, as the sacred writer observes, took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced whom they caught; and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and repaired the cities, and dwelt in them.

In relating this story, Josephus mentions, that there were at that time three annual festivals in Shiloh, to which the men of Israel were usually accompanied by their wives and daughters. As that town was then the seat of the ark of the covenant, it is extremely probable that the three feasts appointed by Moses were there regularly celebrated, by such of the Hebrews at least as had not yet given themselves up entirely to the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth. But the dancing, which is recorded both by the inspired historian and the author of the Jewish Antiquities, made no part of the religious commemoration of the Passover or of Pentecost; being confined to the feast of Tabernacles, when the vintage was gathered in, and when the joy of heart which such an occasion excited, was allowed to express itself in the manner adopted by the daughters of Shiloh. It is for this reason, perhaps, that the sacred narrative makes mention of only one feast of the Lord, which was held yearly on the north side of Bethel,—a supposition which will completely reconcile the statement of Josephus with that of the Bible.

Some commentators, indeed, have imagined that the

festival in question was peculiar to Shiloh, and was, therefore, unknown to the Benjaminites; who, it should seem, required to be informed of the solemnities with which it was usually kept. Leclerc maintains that if it had been one of the three regular festivals, the Passover, the feast of Weeks, or of the Tabernacle, it would have been distinctly specified; and suggests, moreover, that amid such a concourse as usually assembled at these national anniversaries, it would have been impossible to carry off the young women without incurring the resentment of their fathers and brothers.*

But had the celebration at Shiloh been strictly peculiar to that city, it is not probable that the sacred annalist would have described it as a "feast of the Lord;" nor that it should have been known to all the tribes of Israel assembled at Gibeah. Josephus, besides, mentions it in terms which leave no doubt as to its being one of the national festivals. "Three times in the year when we meet at Shiloh, our wives and our daughters accompany us." In respect, again, to the opposition which the Benjaminites might have had to dread, the same historian assures us that none was intended; for the Senate, upon listening to the

* Cum fuerint tria tempora festa anniversaria totius Israelis, quibus se sistere debebat ad Tabernaculum, si modo hanc legem tunc temporis observabant; nomen illius festi, hoc est Paschatis, Hebdomadum, aut Tabernaculorum frondeorum, additum fuisset, si ejusmodi festum hic intelligeretur: non potuissent enim Benjaminitæ intelligere quo anni tempore insidias puellis Siluntinis struere possint. Præterea quando sermo est de festo, cui duo alia similia sunt, non solet sic describi ut ab aliis distingui nequeat: quemadmodum hic fieret, si unum ex tribus celeberrimis Israeliticis festis intelligeretur. Huc accedit quòd, si hæc tria solemnia festa observabantur Silunte, eo ævo, concursus Israelitarum è tota Chananæa minus commodus fuit ejusmodi insidiis; oportuit enim Israelitas, et in urbe et circa urbem, diversoria aut tentoria habere, ita ut insidiæ vix occultæ esse potuissent. Igitur multo malim agi hic de festo quopiam Siluntinæ urbi peculiari, quod quare institutum esset non liquet, et quo puellæ Siluntinæ solebant urbe egredi, ut choreas celebrarent.—*Clerici Comment. in Jud. xxi.* 19.

advice which was given by one of their number, were convinced of its expediency, and decreed that the men "should be allowed to steal themselves wives."* We may therefore conclude, that the occasion which proved so propitious to the surviving soldiers of the beaten tribe, was one of regular occurrence; and that, though some of the rites which were introduced might savour of the idolatry with which the whole land was cursed, the festival at Shiloh was nevertheless celebrated in honour of the true God.

The two incidents which occupy the foregoing pages are, it is well known, inserted in the book of Judges at a later period of the Hebrew history. But the reference with which the narrative in each begins and ends, naturally carries back the reader to the times which preceded the administration of Othniel; when, as yet there was no supreme ruler in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes. In introducing them at this early stage, I follow the example of Josephus and the judgment of the most learned expositors; who, with one consent, place the war of Gibeah and the enterprise of the Danites, before the government of the Judges.

The relaxation of manners which accompanied the practice of idolatry among the Hebrews, provoked against them the anger of Jehovah to such a degree, that he permitted one of the sovereigns who dwelt beyond the Euphrates to lead an army into the land of Canaan, and to reduce them to the condition of tributaries. The Lord sold them, saith the scripture, into the hand of Chusan Rishathaim, whom they were compelled to serve eight years. In this state of tribulation the children of Israel

* Judges xxi. 22. Josephi Antiq. Jud. lib. v. c. 2.—Και οι μεν αυτοις πεισθεντες, ψηφιζονται τον δια της αρπαγης γαμον τοις Βενιαμιταις.

lifted up their voice and cried unto God; who, in compassion to their sufferings, raised up a deliverer to them in the person of Othniel, the son of Kenaz, and a relative of the venerated Caleb.*

The courage and talents of this commander had been already proved at the siege of Kiriath-sepher; where he distinguished himself in the presence of the whole army, and received as a reward the hand and fortune of Caleb's daughter.† On the present occasion he was aided by supernatural strength; for the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel and went out to war; and the Lord delivered Chusan Rishathaim into his hand, and his hand prevailed against Chusan Rishathaim.‡

The victories of Othniel secured to his people a lasting peace. Forty years elapsed before the rest of the land was again disturbed by foreign arms; after which the Israelites, relapsing into their evil practices and doing evil in the sight of Heaven, were assailed by their ancient enemies the Moabites, under Eglon their king.§

It is the opinion of Stackhouse, mentioned in his History of the Bible, that the insurrection of the Benjaminites, and the capture of Laish, took place towards the end of the long peace which followed the first servitude. "During this space of time, says he, the people fell into a general apostacy and corruption of manners, whereof these two stories are sad and remarkable instances." But the sacred historian informs us that the events alluded to occurred while there was no king or judge in Israel,—a description which does not apply to the times of Othniel, who appears to have retained his authority over Israel till the day of his death. It was not till after the son of

* Judges iii. 8, 9.
† Judges i. 12, 13.
‡ Judges iii. 10.
§ Judges iii. 11, 12.

Kenaz died, that the Hebrews are said to have done evil again in the sight of the Lord, and to bring down upon their heads the vengeance which Jehovah had prepared for them by strengthening the hand of the king of Moab.* This opinion is farther confirmed by Josephus, who not only inserts the history of Micah and of the Levite before the Assyrian domination, but states explicitly, that Othniel ruled the Israelites forty years; whence it is perfectly clear, that the anarchy which is repeatedly alluded to in the book of Judges, could not have occurred between the first and second servitudes.

It has been already admitted, indeed, that the period which elapsed before the invasion from Mesopotamia, seems too short to be quite consistent with that change of manners and full establishment of idolatry among the Hebrews, which led to the chastisement inflicted upon them by the soldiers of the East. The crimes of Gibeah, as well as the superstition of mount Ephraim, appear to denote a certain degree of inveteracy in the habits of the people, as well as in the forms of society, which could not, we are disposed to think, have been produced by the intercourse of only a few years with the natives of Canaan. In the sacred history, we have but one step from the zeal manifested by the followers of Joshua, who at Shechem avouched the Lord to be their God, whom they promised to serve and whose voice they were ever to obey, to the hideous depravity and confirmed superstition which led to the civil war between Benjamin and the eleven tribes. A longer interval, therefore, cannot but appear desirable to explain, on the ordinary principles of human conduct, the remarkable defection of the Israelites from the religion

* Judges iii. 12.

of Moses; and, perhaps, it was from some such view of convenience, that Stackhouse, in opposition to the authority of Josephus, as well as of the most enlightened commentators, postponed the episodical details of Micah and the Levite until after the defeat of Chusan Rishathaim. But the order pursued by the author of the Jewish Antiquities, as well as the allusion of the inspired writer to the character of the times in which these occurrences fell out, present objections so strong as neither to be removed nor overcome.

The rebellion of the Hebrews against the laws of Jehovah prepared a yoke for their necks after Othniel was dead. Eglon gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and took possession of the city of palm trees; where he exercised over the conquered tribes the rights of a master during the long period of eighteen years.* Josephus relates, that he built a royal palace at Jericho; and that he let slip no opportunity of harassing his tributaries, and of making them feel the full weight of his cruel bondage. From comparing these statements, it becomes obvious that a town had been built near the ruins of Jericho; which being situated in a plain adorned with a profusion of palms, was distinguished by the name which is given to it in the Bible. There the king of Moab had an occasional residence, in order that he might be at hand to watch the movements of the impatient Hebrews, and to receive from time to time the taxes with which he had thought proper to burden their industry and subdue their spirits.†

In the eighteenth year of this servitude, Ehud the son of Gera was appointed by his countrymen to carry to

* Judges iii. 13, 14.

† Judges iii. 14., and Josephus' Jewish Antiquities, book v. chap. 4.

Eglon, at the city of palm trees, the annual tribute that they were accustomed to pay. This champion whom Divine Providence raised up to effect the deliverance of Israel, belonged to the tribe of Benjamin; was celebrated for great bodily strength, and particularly for the activity and vigour with which he could use his left hand. Before setting out to execute his commission, "he made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his left thigh." Josephus relates that Ehud was familiar with the king of Moab; and had even insinuated himself so far into his good opinion, as to have gained the favour not only of Eglon individually, but even of the chief persons by whom the latter was usually surrounded. It was during the heat of the day that the Hebrew envoy waited on the pagan monarch, to deliver to him the accustomed pledge of fidelity and dependence; when, being left with him alone in a summer parlour, he resolved to accomplish without delay the important service with which he believed his courage and patriotism were charged. Apprehensive that his blow might not prove decisive, were the corpulent king to remain reclining on his couch, he pretended that he had a dream or vision to impart to him by the command of God; upon which, in reverence to a Divine communication, Eglon raised himself from his seat, when he instantly received a mortal wound from the dagger of Ehud. The latter, leaving the weapon in his body, made haste to leave the chamber, and to lock the doors.*

The son of Gera having reached a band of his countrymen, informed them of his exploit; and exhorted them to seize immediately the fords of Jordan, that they

* Judges iii. 17—23. Josephus, book v. chap. 4.

might thereby at once preclude the escape of the Moabites who were on its western bank, and prevent the advance of fresh troops to assist the garrison of the royal city. The Scripture account represents Ehud as continuing his flight until he had reached mount Ephraim, where he blew a trumpet and assembled the people; but if we consider the great distance of that position, we shall perhaps be inclined to adopt, in preference, the narrative of Josephus, who ascribes the first movement in favour of liberty to the inhabitants of the place where Eglon dwelt. The Israelites, led by the resolute chief who had thus given a turn to their affairs, attacked the men of Moab, ten thousand in number, and put them all to the sword. "He said unto them, Follow after me; for the Lord hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took the fords of Jordan towards Moab, and they suffered not a man to pass over. So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel; and the land had rest fourscore years."

Leaving to the professed commentator the minuter remarks which belong to verbal criticism and philology, I cannot yet omit an observation supplied by the learning of Dr Wells, on the use of the word *quarries* in the narrative which has just been closed. It is said, that while the guards of Eglon tarried, Ehud passed beyond the quarries and escaped unto Seirath;* a place which, from the context, plainly enough appears to have been situated in mount Ephraim, not far from Gilgal.

It is remarkable, he observes, because it is very probably thought to be the place denoted by the Jewish historian, Josephus, when he tells us, that the posterity of Seth,

* Judges iii. 26.

knowing by Adam's predictions, that the world should first perish by water and then by fire; and being desirous that after ages should know the discoveries they had made in *astronomy*, they engraved them upon two columns or pillars, one of stone to resist the water, and the other of brick to resist the fire; and that they placed those columns in Syrias, that is, the Seirath here mentioned in the sacred history. Which opinion is confirmed, in that it appears also, from the sacred history, that there were some engravings to be seen in these parts. For the word which we render in our English translation *quarries*, does denote also, and is actually rendered in the Septuagint version, *graven images* or *engravings*, which is taken notice of in the margin of our Bible. Hence some have imagined that Adam and his posterity dwelt in Judea; but very erroneously. For it is a mere fable to ascribe those columns to the posterity of Seth, and to think them older than the deluge; they being rather a work of the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, who might follow herein the example of their neighbours the Egyptians.*

Much difference of opinion has subsisted among theologians in regard to the lawfulness of Ehud's conduct towards the sovereign of Moab. Stackhouse remarks, that though the former wrought the deliverance of Israel, it was by a method nowise to be justified under a less supposition than that he had a divine commission for so doing.†. But perhaps the caution of Saurin on this question manifests a species of wisdom which is much more valuable to the young divine, than the bold dogmatism of much more learned men. "We shall not inquire," says he, "whether the law of nature and nations, which has so

* Wells' Geography of the Old Testament, part ii. chap. 6.
† History of the Bible, book v. chap. 2.

often armed the oppressed against the oppressor, could render legitimate the action of Ehud. The solution of this point depends upon a variety of circumstances which are to us perfectly unknown. We cannot determine, for instance, whether the authority of the king of Moab had been acknowledged by any formal compact."* It is in fact an example above all common rules; and is only to be defended on the ground, that the Hebrews, at the period in question, were governed by a special providence.

The successes of Ehud against the Moabites gave rest to the eastern borders of Israel a long series of years. But the tranquillity enjoyed by the western coast was neither so long nor so uninterrupted; for the Philistines, who questioned the right, or dreaded the power of their neighbours, seized every opportunity of invading their lands and carrying away their property. Shamgar, whose name is enrolled among Hebrew patriots, avenged from time to time the cause of his countrymen by his personal strength and firmness; for whenever the enemy appeared within the

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* Discours Historiques, Critiques, &c. par M. Saurin, vol. iii. p. 307, de l'Edit. à la Haye, 1730. On this question, as discussed, or rather alluded to by Grotius, the author of the History of the Bible is guilty of a misquotation from the elaborate treatise De Jure Belli ac Pacis. "It is," says he, "the observation of the learned Grotius, that the authority of the king of Moab was never legitimized by any convention of the Israelites, and consequently that they were at liberty to shake off his yoke, whenever they found a convenient opportunity."—*Stackhouse*, book v. chap. 2. page 79. Edit. 1817.

Grotius does not make the assertion which is here attributed to him. In reference to the case of Ehud, he simply remarks, "Non debet movere nos in contrariam sententiam factum Aodis in Eglonem regem Moabitarum: nam aperte testatur sacra auctoritas, hunc a Deo ipso vindicem suscitatum, mandato scilicet speciali. *Neque vero constat hunc Moabitarum regem nullum jus imperandi ex pactione habuisse.*" *It is not clear that he had no right to rule founded on compact;* and hence, as Grotius intimates, arises the difficulty of determining in regard to the conduct of Ehud.—*Hugonis Grotii De Jure Belli ac Pacis Libri tres*, lib. i. cap. 4. sect. 19. p. 94. Edit. Amstel. 1670.

Stackhouse must have quoted at second hand from Saurin, where the sentiment of Grotius is somewhat disguised in a French translation.

inheritance of his tribe, he attacked their stragglers and plundering parties with so much vigour, that, though armed only with the instruments which he used for his labour in the fields, and assisted perhaps by his servants, he slew, of the Philistines in all, not fewer than six hundred men. His resolution and public spirit recommended him to the situation of judge; but, as he died in the first year of his government, he had no opportunity of giving celebrity to his administration by the performance of any signal exploit in regular war.*

The repeated punishments inflicted upon Israel by the just anger of Heaven, failed to produce, in the national character, a permanent reformation. When Ehud was dead, they once more resumed their idolatrous practices, and did evil in the sight of the Lord. Jabin, an ambitious prince, who appears to have assumed the title of the king of Canaan, was, on this occasion, the instrument employed by Divine Providence to bring the chosen people to a sense of their defection and disobedience. His army, which was under the command of Sisera, an able and experienced leader, was very numerous, and had its lines strengthened by the addition of nine hundred chariots of iron. Josephus asserts that he had in pay three hundred thousand footmen, ten thousand horse, and no fewer than three thousand chariots; a force so completely overwhelming, that the Hebrews, now long unaccustomed to war, found it necessary to quit the field, and purchase peace by the payment of an annual tribute. The Lord sold them into the hand of this powerful chief, and twenty years he mightily oppressed their families with his exactions and manifold tyranny.†

The government of the tribes was at that time in the

* Judges iii. 31. † Judges iv. 1, 2, 3.

hands of a woman, Deborah, the wife of Lapidoth; who, we are told, dwelt under the palm tree between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim, whither the children of Israel went up to her for judgment. She is described as a prophetess; not that she was endowed with miraculous powers, or had, generally speaking, the gift of foreseeing future events, but merely because her knowledge and piety had gained her the esteem of the inhabitants, and made them willing to be guided by her advice in matters of difficulty, as well as to abide by her decisions in all such questions as respected property or character.*

When the season for the deliverance of her people drew near, she was moved by a divine impulse to send for Barak the son of Abinoam; upon which she desired him to place himself at the head of ten thousand men, and go forth to meet the host of the Canaanitish king, near the strong grounds of mount Tabor. Barak, measuring the undertaking by the extent of his means rather than by the authority of his commission, refused to undertake it in his own person, or to charge himself alone with so painful a responsibility. He saw that half the tribes, oppressed with despair and reduced to the utmost weakness, were no longer in a condition to take the field, and could not be induced to encounter the hazard of another defeat at the hand of a captain so fierce and relentless. Reuben, he perceived, was divided and feeble. The children of Dan put confidence in their ships, and were even ready to sail away in quest of a more peaceful country. Asher remained satisfied with the defence of his fortifications on the sea coast; and was deaf to the voice of patriotism which called him to join his brethren at Kedesh for the recovery

* Judges iv. 4, 5.

of their independence. Naphtali, Zebulun, and Benjamin, with a part of Issachar, were the only tribes upon whom he could place the smallest reliance; and as the victory which was promised to him could only be gained by the assistance of Heaven, he declared that he would not embark in a cause which, to a merely human eye, appeared utterly hopeless, unless Deborah, to whom the vision of prosperity had been revealed, would consent to accompany him in the expedition.

The prophetess agreed to be present with the army, and to second the efforts of the soldiers by her prayers and counsel. Aware that the chief strength of Jabin's host consisted in his cavalry and chariots, she gave directions that the Hebrews should pitch their tents on Tabor,—a mountain which, from its situation, was most convenient for the three tribes that had taken the field, and, from the steep and rugged nature of its ascent, presented the greatest obstacle to the military plans of Sisera.*

Intelligence of this movement, on the part of the son of Abinoam, soon reached the ears of the king of Canaan; who immediately sent his favourite general with his nine

* The following notice of mount Tabor is copied from Maundrell:—"After a very laborious ascent, which took up near an hour, we reached the highest part of the mountain, which has a plain area at top, fertile and delicious, and of an oval figure, about one furlong in breadth, and two in length. The area is enclosed with trees on all parts, except towards the south, and from hence you have a prospect which (if nothing else) well rewards the labour of ascending it; for it is impossible for the eyes of man to behold any greater gratification of this nature. The top of this mountain was anciently environed with walls and trenches, and other fortifications, of which some remains are still visible. In this area there are in several places cisterns of good water; but those which are most devoutly visited, are three contiguous grottos, made to represent the three tabernacles which St Peter proposed to erect; because for many ages it has been believed that here it was that our blessed Saviour was transfigured in the presence of his three Apostles, Peter, James, and John, though some later writers have made a doubt of it. —*Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, p. 96, 97. Edit. 1823.

hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that were with him, from Harosheth of the Gentiles unto the river Kishon; a stream which flows from the mountain whereon the Israelites were encamped.* Deborah, dreading the effects of a protracted beleaguerment, and trusting in that supernatural aid, without which all human endeavours must have been vain, gave instructions to Barak to attack his adversary without delay, and before his troops could have recovered from the disorder of their march. Barak obeyed and obtained a complete victory; for the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword; so that Sisera lighting down off his chariot fled away on his feet, and there was not a man of his host left alive.

Josephus narrates, that the armies were no sooner engaged, than there arose a violent wind, accompanied with a most furious tempest of rain and hail. The storm, driving in the very faces of the Canaanites, so darkened their eyes, that their arrows and slings were of no advantage to them; while the cold, occasioned by the tempest, became so piercing that they could not handle their swords to check the onset of the Hebrews. The latter, having their backs turned to the wind, were not at all incommoded by its violence; and they assumed such courage, too, from the persuasion that God was assisting them, that they rushed upon the main body of the enemy and cut them down in great numbers. In a word, it came to pass, that the army of Jabin was broken, dispersed, and cut to pieces: so that betwixt those that fell by the sword of the Israelites, those that were trampled to death under the feet of their own horses, those who were crushed by the chariots, and those who were smitten in their flight by the conquerors, no fewer

* Judges iv. 12, 13.

than thirty thousand foot, ten thousand cavalry, and three thousand chariots, were entirely destroyed.* The pursuit continued all day; and, when night approached, the stars shone forth with such an uncommon degree of lustre, that the victors were not impeded in their course until they reached Harosheth of the Gentiles, the seat of Sisera's command. The historian adds, that Barak, immediately after his success at mount Tabor, marched against Jabin himself; whom he defeated at Hazor, overthrew the city to the foundations, and reduced his power to the lowest ebb.

The hard fate of Sisera in the tent of Jael has given occasion to the same species of casuistry that has so long employed the ingenuity of divines, in regard to the enterprise of Ehud. That the wife of Heber was guilty of a cruel and unwarrantable act there cannot be the smallest doubt; for the defeated commander was not only at peace with her tribe, but he had, besides, put his life into her hands under the pledge of that faith and hospitality which are hardly ever violated by the most ignorant barbarians. Nor was there any competition between her public duty and what ought to have been her private feelings. She was not, as far as appears, a daughter of Israel, and therefore not liable to be seduced by that strong sentiment of patriotism, which has often taught men to believe that the merit of delivering their native land from the tyranny of an unjust ruler, would atone for a direct and positive breach of the divine commandments. She had not the apology of Ehud; who, grieved at the oppression under which his country groaned, and knowing that the Moabite had no foundation for his power over the Hebrews but the terror of his sword,

* Josephus's Jewish Antiquities, book v. c. 6.; and Judges iv. 15, 16.

resolved to awaken the dormant energies of his people, and to lead them forward to make at least one honourable attempt to recover their independence. Besides, it could be said of the son of Gera that the "Lord raised him up as a deliverer;" and he himself, when at the head of his brave Ephraimites, felt entitled to exclaim, "Follow me, for Jehovah hath delivered your enemies, the Moabites, into your hand!" But Jael had no divine warrant for her conduct. On the contrary, she proceeded of her own free will to commit a crime which at once dishonoured her sex, infringed her personal faith, violated the sacred pledge that is given by every one who offers or grants protection to the unfortunate, and broke one of the strongest laws of Almighty God.* The simple narrative of the inspired author, indeed, carries on its face the most unambiguous condemna-

* In relation to the conduct of Jael, the following remarks by Bishop Gleig are deserving of attention:—"When our duty to God, and to any individual man, become inconsistent with each other, no one ever supposed that the latter is not to be superseded by the former: but I am not aware that any duty, either to God or to the Israelites, made it necessary for Jael to violate the laws of hospitality to Sisera the captain of the host of Hazor. The house of Heber, her husband, was equally at peace with Israel and with Jabin king of Canaan. The Kenites had indeed been much more indebted to the Israelites than to the Canaanites. Jael might therefore have refused to receive Sisera under her roof, because she could not protect him from his enemies should they come in pursuit of him, without violating an obligation much stronger than any under which she was either to him or to his master; but when he came under her roof, she was surely to protect him as far as that superior obligation would permit. He was not her personal enemy; and granting himself and his master to have been such tyrants as our author (Stackhouse) supposes, neither Jael nor any other private individual had a right to rid the world either of the sovereign or of the servant by treachery! She might, without the breach of any duty, have received Sisera into her tent; but when she had received him, she could not, without incurring guilt of the deepest dye, murder him with her own hands. She could not, indeed, with innocence, have *gone to the tent door*, and voluntarily betrayed him to Barak: but had she remained quietly within, and Barak had come *to demand if he was there*, she could not, without a breach of the higher duty which she owed to Israel, have preserved Sisera at the expense of a lie. It is perfectly in vain to attempt a vindication of her conduct; for God can never have authorised falsehood and treachery in such a case as her's with Sisera; nor do the words of Deborah at all imply an approbation of Jael's

tion of this treacherous female. Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my Lord, turn in to me; fear not. And when he had turned in unto her, she covered him with a mantle.—And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said, Come, and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples.*

The reader will turn with pleasure from contemplating the cruel treachery of one woman to admire the fine poetical powers of another, animated by the noblest spirit of patriotism. The song of Deborah has been the theme of praise and commentary among the most accomplished of our scholars; and every one has improved upon his predecessor in discovering in it new beauties, proofs of deep learning, and unexpected allusions. Kennicot, Horsley, Saurin, and Geddes, have favoured the world with their respective versions; all of whom, I suspect, have drawn from the rich mine of Hebrew analogies, many more ideas than Deborah can be imagined to have connected with the flowing strains of her impassioned commemoration.

Bishop Horsley divides the poem into three parts; the second of which is entitled the Battle, the third is called the Victory. The first, on this principle, ought to have been denominated the Muster; because in it are recorded the names of the several tribes which obeyed the summons of

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moral conduct; they are merely a wish or prayer that she might be rendered happy in this world for the service which she had rendered to Israel; and perhaps it is not possible for the most upright mind, in such circumstances, to avoid the forming of such a wish."—*Stackhouse's History of the Bible, edited by Bishop Gleig*, 3 vols. 4to.

* Judges iv. 17, 18, 22.

Barak Ben-Abinoam, and hastened to the rocks of Tabor to meet the host of Jabin. In the Bishop's translation, the sixth and seventh verses are expressed as follows:—

> In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath,
> In the days of Jael, the high ways were deserted;
> And they who had travelled the high ways,
> Travelled roads of perversity.

In a note we are informed that by the "high ways," are meant the highways of God's commandments; and, of course, the "roads of perversity" were the paths of vice! The fourteenth and fifteenth verses in the same translation are worded thus:—

> From Machir went down the delineators,
> And from Zebulun they that drew the pen of the scribe;
> And the princes of Issachar (went) with Deborah,
> And Issachar strengthened Barak,
> Sent close at his feet into the valley.

The "delineators," it is stated, were those who excelled in hieroglyphics; and they who "drew the pen of the scribe" were such as practised alphabetical writing. When, however, we reflect that this meeting of heroes was not for any literary purpose, but to encounter in the field of battle one of the most formidable enemies that Israel ever had to contend with; we are at a loss to perceive the reason why the consort of Lapidoth should have thought proper to celebrate the achievements of men, whose chief talent consisted in sketching figures of animals upon stone-slabs, or in recording events on sheets of parchment. The version of Geddes, therefore, is more in harmony with the subject of Deborah's composition, and is, besides, not less faithful to the original:—

> From Machir came down chieftains,
> And from Zebulun sceptre-bearers.

Numbered with Deborah were the chiefs of Issachar:
Issachar was Barak's trusty guard,
That attended him into the valley.

For "chieftains" and "sceptre-bearers," he even proposes to substitute *lance-throwers* and *marksmen;* and, assuredly, if this freedom of translation can be reconciled with the original text, we shall be thereby supplied with a detachment of troops far better fitted for the service in which Barak wished to employ them on the acclivities of Tabor, than were either delineators or those that merely *drew the pen.*

It must be acknowledged, that the Hebrew, in this passage, is so excessively obscure or corrupted, that any one conjecture as to the meaning seems to have as much authority as any other; for which reason the interpretation that comes nearest common sense has undoubtedly the best claim upon our acceptance. It is clear, that שבט signifies a sceptre, a rod, and also a pen;* the latter instrument in those days bearing some resemblance to a small dagger: and it is equally certain, that סֹפֵר denotes number, or rather, perhaps, numeration or the act of numbering. *They who handle the sceptre of number,* therefore, is a phrase that might be used by a poetical writer as descriptive of those Heads of families who commanded under the princes of the tribes, and who, in Scripture, are denominated

* It is worthy of remark, that the word sceptre is by Parkhurst derived from שבט, through the Greek σκηπτρον. The meanings given by this lexicographer to the Hebrew term under consideration are as follows:—1. *A rod or longish staff.* 2. *A sceptre or ensign of authority.* 3. *A tribe or branch of a family or nation shooting* from one common stock. 4. A staff, the ensign not of *regal* but of *tribual* jurisdiction, or of that exercised by the head of a tribe, Gen. xlix. 10. Hence used for the *ruler or judge of the tribe himself*, Gen. xlix. 16.; from which passage it appears that each tribe of Israel had this ensign of authority belonging to it. 5. A pen or style used to write with, and resembling a small rod. 6. As a noun masculine, שבטים, signifies *spears* or javelins; *i. e.* staves headed with iron.

captains of hundreds; or it might be applied to the princes themselves, and be strictly synonimous with the מחקקים of the former clause. Were we to adopt the rendering now suggested, the passage in question would run as follows: "Out of Machir came down governors; and out of Zebulun they that wield the sceptre of thousands."

But the word שבט not only signifies a sceptre; it also denotes *a tribe, a branch of a family or nation* shooting from one common stock, as the *rod* or branch shoots from the tree. Examples of this acceptation occur in Genesis xlix. 28. Numbers xviii. 2, and in a variety of other places referred to by Parkhurst. Nay, the same term is often used to designate not only the staff of tribual jurisdiction, as in Genesis xlix. 10, but even the ruler himself, or judge of the tribe, Genesis xlix. 16.: so that we here find good reason to believe that the instruments which the heroes of Zebulun brandished against the troops of Sisera, were of a more warlike description than pens and graving tools.

In the version of the Seventy we cannot perceive the smallest glimmering of sense. They appear even to have had a different reading of the Hebrew from that which has come down to our times; or to have changed, on their own responsibility, the word מחקקים into מחקריס,—an alteration which covers, with additional obscurity, the triumphal encomiums of Deborah. Ἐν ἐμοὶ Μαχὶς κατέβησαν ἐξερευνῶντες. Καὶ ἀπὸ Ζαβουλὼν ἕλκοντες ἐν ῥάβδῳ διηγήσεως γραμματεως. *In me Machir descenderunt perscrutantes. Et de Zabulon trahentes in virga narrationis scribæ.**

* Leclerc, after noticing the amended version of the Septuagint, remarks, *but what was their meaning I cannot understand:* "*sed quo sensu non intelligo.*" The Vatican, Alexandrian, and Aldine editions vary a little, but agree in the main; "hence we may see," adds this commentator, "that their reading was much the same as ours, and that they understood it no better."—*Clericus in loc.*

The Vulgate boldly removes the verbal difficulty by seizing at once the meaning of the writer: *De Makir principes descenderunt; et de Zabulon qui exercitum ducerent ad bellandum.* There might, no doubt, be urged against this translation a number of critical objections founded on the more common usages of the language; but as sense and consistency have some value even in poetry, there is, I am confident, scarcely any reader who will not prefer the above intelligible exposition of Deborah's song to that more recondite view of its meaning, which, instead of princes and commanders of tribes, brings into the field against the redoubtable Sisera, hieroglyphic painters and writers of books.

This ode, in short, has been the opprobrium of commentators; and could the prophetess of mount Ephraim have foreseen the injury which her reputation, as an author, was doomed to suffer from the absurdity of critics, nothing short of a divine impulse and an imperative sense of duty could have induced her to commit her composition to writing. Saurin, for example, makes her exclaim, that she herself is another Shamgar, who slew six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad! "Ye idolatrous princes, listen to a woman; and learn from the sublimity of her ideas, and from the pomp of her expressions, what is the majesty of that God who animates her soul. I, even I, have been raised up like another Shamgar: the Almighty has elevated me above the weaknesses of my sex, and has appointed me to direct the movements of all Israel."*

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* Ecoutez une femme: et apprenez de la sublimité de ses idées, et de la pompe de ses expressions, quelle est la majesté du Dieu qui l'anime. Moi, moi, j'ai eté suscitée comme un autre Schamgar; la Dieu tout-puissant m'a elevée au dessus des foiblesses de mon sexe, et m'a commise pour presider sur la conduite de tout Israel.—*Discours sur la Defaite de Jabin et de Sisera.*

St Jerome, again, is convinced, that the address in the tenth verse, to them "that ride on white asses," has a peculiar depth of signification; for by the white asses, he assures us, were meant the DOCTORS OF ISRAEL!*

Grotius, on his part, has no doubt, that, by the stars mentioned in the twentieth verse, which are there said to have fought against Sisera, the prophetess wished us to understand the angels; for angels are called stars on account of their splendour and celestial nature.† But every one must perceive, at the first glance, that Deborah alluded not to the intellectual ministers of the Divine Presence. Her thoughts were directed solely to that planetary influence which was supposed to have occasioned the storm sent against the Canaanites in the hour of conflict; and which, when united with the swellings of the river Kishon, completed the overthrow of their formidable host. This is the view taken by Bishop Horsley, who sees no other difficulty in the question, than that the *fixed stars* should likewise be introduced as taking a share in the mortal strife; particularly as he could not perceive "how these stars should exert any *occasional* influence upon our atmosphere." "I only mean to remark," he adds, "that they are not of necessity excluded by the mention of the *orbits* of those stars which were engaged in this battle."‡

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* "Vous qui montez sur des anesses bigarrées, qui sont la voiture des personnes distinguées." *Bigarrées* means white and red. "C'est ainsi que Bochart traduit le mot Hebreu. St Jerome a eu une pensée assez bizarre sur ce sujet; il entend par ces *anesses blanches* les Docteurs d'Israel.—*Saurin Defaite de Jabin*, p. 332.

The words used by Bochart are *asinus albo rubroque distinctus.*—*Hieroz.* part I. lib. ii. c. 12. p. 182.

† *Stellæ manentes in ordine et cursu suo adversus Siseram pugnaverunt;*" id est, Angeli, veluti de loco superiore, in eos pugnaverunt. Angeli stellarum nomine appellantur ob naturam cælestem et splendorem.

‡ Critical Notes on the Song of Deborah, in volume fourth of Biblical Criticism. Moyle takes the same view of this interesting topic. "What

Such readers as are desirous to become acquainted with the opinions of learned men in regard to the structure of Deborah's song, viewed in the light of a mere literary composition, will have their curiosity gratified by consulting the works of Jerome, Philo, Mercer, Meibomius, Ludovicus Cappellus, Martinius, Bohlius, Pfeiffer, Calmet, Lowth, and Jebb; some of whom imagine that there are to be found in it all the properties of a regular poem, of which the versification may be determined according to the Greek and Roman models.*

But instead of entering into the seducing path of philology, we must pursue the narrative of Hebrew affairs; which, after the event so feelingly celebrated by Deborah,

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do you think of that expression in Judges, of the stars fighting in their courses against Sisera? Don't you understand by it a remarkable defeat of that General by a visible hand from heaven, in causing mighty and sudden rains to fall; which the common opinion did ascribe to a special influence of the planets, by means of which the river Kishon was swollen to that degree as to sweep away a great part of Sisera's army."—*Letters concerning the Thundering Legion. Moyle's Works*, vol. ii. p. 131.

* Jerome, in his preface to the *Chronica* of Eusebius, writes thus on the subject of Hebrew composition:—Inde adeo venit, ut sacræ literæ minus comptæ et dure sonantes videantur; quod diserti homines interpretatas eas de Hebræo nescientes, dum superficiem, non medullam, inspiciunt, antè quasi vestem orationis sordidam perhorrescant, quàm pulchrum intrinsecus rerum corpus inveniant. Denique quod Psalterio canorius, quod in morem nostri Flacci, et Græci Pindari nunc Iambo currit, nunc Alcaico personat, nunc Sapphico tumet, nunc semipede ingreditur. Quid Deuteronomii et Esaicæ cantico pulchrius? Quid Salomone gravius? Quid perfectius Job. Quæ omnia *Hexametris* et *Pentametris* versibus, ut Josephus et Origenes scribunt, apud suos composita decurrunt.—Vide *Thesaurum Temporum*, a Scaligero editum, anno 1658.

For the other authors cited above, see Calmet's *Dissert. de Poesi Hebræorum*; and for the subjects on which they have written, consult Lowth's *Prælectiones*, and Jebb's Sacred Literature.

Conradus Pellicanus, apud Patrick, expresses his admiration of Deborah in these words:—"Let some Homer or Virgil go now and compare his poetry, if he be able, with the song of this woman. And if there be any one that excels in eloquence and learning, and hath more leisure than I, let him celebrate the praises and learning of this panegyrick more copiously."—*Commentary upon Judges*, chap. 5.

assumed an air of great prosperity. The land had rest forty years. Without reverting to the opinion of Usher, who fixes the commencement of that period at the death of Ehud, or rather, it may be, at the end of the peace procured to the country by his arms, I cannot but remark, that the interval of repose was of more than sufficient duration to plunge the Israelites back again into their wonted idolatries. Every favour bestowed upon that people was a new source of rebellion and disaffection. They had the unhappy art of poisoning all their successes by abusing the prosperity to which these led; and it was necessary to visit them from time with renewed distress, in order to recall them to their duty, and to remind them of their dependence on that Special Providence which watched over their interests. Nehemiah has well described their character and history in the following terms:—

"So the children went in and possessed the land, and thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would. And they took strong cities, and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and oliveyards, and fruit-trees in abundance: so they did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness. Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew their prophets, which testified against them to turn them to thee; and they wrought great provocations. Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and, according to thy manifold mercies, thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.

But after they had rest, they did evil again before thee: therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them."*

The sins which polluted the long rest secured to the Hebrews by their decisive victory over Sisera, were at length punished by the devastation of their country under the hands of the Midianites and other eastern tribes. The people just named were, it is well known, almost exterminated by Moses, when he was commanded by Jehovah to avenge upon them their crimes against the children of Israel, at the time that the latter emerged from the wilderness. In the thirty-first chapter of the book of Numbers, there is inserted a minute account of the measures adopted by the inspired legislator to cut off the remembrance of Midian from the face of the earth. All the males, young and old, who had fallen into the hands of the conquerors were put to death; as well as all the women who could be suspected of having had any share in the memorable seduction of Beth-peor.†

It is not improbable that this severity on the part of the Hebrews was called to mind, even after the lapse of two hundred years. If Amalek, in the days of Saul, was doomed to pay the penalty to which his ancestor exposed himself by unfriendly treatment of the Israelites when on their journey from Egypt, we may conclude that those who were descended from the miserable remains of Midian, were not less inclined to cherish the recollections of the cruel atonement which their forefathers were compelled to make, when the fortune of war turned against them in the plains of Moab.‡ Be this as it may, there is no doubt that when for the sins of Israel the hand of

* Nehemiah ix. 24—29. † Numbers xxxi. 16—19.
‡ 1 Samuel xv. 2, 3.

the Midianites prevailed against them, the latter pursued their advantage with unrelenting rage. The sacred writer states, that "because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds. And it was so, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the East, even they came up against them; and they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza; and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it. And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord."*

It appears to have been during the calamities brought upon the Hebrews by these barbarous invaders, that the occurrences took place which form the affecting narrative of the book of Ruth. It was, at least, in the days when the Judges ruled, that the famine was in the land, the pressure of which compelled Elimelech, the man of Bethlehem-Judah, to go to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. In the short space of ten years, Naomi found herself deprived of her husband and both her children; after which she heard that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread, when she immediately resolved to return into her native land. The simplicity and affection of Ruth, who clave to the diminished fortunes of her mother-in-law, rendered her worthy of the high destiny which Divine Providence had in reserve for her: and the reader of her little story en-

* Judges vi. 2—6.

joys no small satisfaction when he finds, that, as the wife of Boaz, she became the parent of a long line of Jewish kings, and thereby, too, connected her name with the greatest event in the history of the human race.*

The oppression of the Midianites was so intolerable, that the Hebrews cried unto the Lord for relief; and as the voice of their sorrow was now accompanied with the feeling of penitence, the Divine mercy hastened to raise up a deliverer to rescue them from the hand of the enemy. The person chosen on the present occasion for this gracious purpose was Gideon, the son of Joash, of the family of Abiezer; who, when the messenger of the Lord appeared unto him, was threshing corn by the wine-press, in a cellar under ground, to conceal it from the Midianites.†

The Scripture relates that, before the angel was commissioned to this champion of Israel, a prophet was sent by the Lord to upbraid the people with their stubbornness and repeated idolatries; but without the power of granting or even of promising to them any deliverance. He reminded them of the great things that had been done for them both in Egypt and in the wilderness, from which their wickedness had prevented them from deriving any permanent advantage; and also of commandments enjoined upon their observance by the authority of Jehovah, which they had almost constantly disobeyed, and thereby involved their affairs in irretrievable ruin.‡

But the Divine messenger who sat under the oak at Ophrah was charged with a more gracious duty. He was

* Ruth i. 1. 6.; iv. 22. Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

† The wine-presses in Judea were dug in the ground; and probably, like those of Persia, were lined with stone to make them at once cool and secure.

‡ Judges vi. 7—10.

sent to comfort and not to rebuke. Having assumed the form of a human being, he addressed Gideon and said, "the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour;" while the other, judging of him by his appearance, replied, "O, sir, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?" The angel answered this doubtful expostulation by giving him at the same moment a command and an authority to deliver Israel from the domination of the Midianites. Gideon at first attempted an excuse for himself, on the ground that his family did not possess in their tribe such a degree of influence as would justify or support an undertaking so extremely hazardous; but, when farther urged, he intimated that he was not unwilling to encounter either the toil or the danger, provided he were assured that the individual who seemed to take so great an interest in the welfare of the Hebrews, was a well-accredited agent. He asked the stranger to remain until he should prepare some food, of which, agreeably to the rules of ancient hospitality, he wished him to partake, before he should resume his journey. When the simple entertainment was presented, the angel disclosed the high nature of his authority by converting the meat into an apparent sacrifice: he touched the bread and the flesh with the rod which was in his hand, when they were immediately consumed by means of supernatural fire.*

* Judges vi. 19, 20, 21. Authors are not agreed whether to call this meat-offering, which was made to the angel, by the name of a sacrifice or not: but assuredly, if the character of an action is to be determined by the motives and intention whence it proceeds, the flesh and broth of Gideon, though consumed by supernatural fire, had nothing in them that were properly of an expiatory or eucharistical nature. Bishop Patrick is positive that no sacrifice was intended.

But a greater difficulty presents itself in respect to the bullock which he offered on the altar which Jehovah commanded him to erect. "The Lord said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of

He could no longer doubt that the commission which he had received was conveyed to him by a divine person; but the uncertainty which was thereby removed from his mind was succeeded by a painful conviction, that, because he had seen a supernatural being, he could not live. Alas! O Lord God, he exclaimed, for because I have seen an angel face to face—but before he had time to give full utterance to his apprehensions, the Lord said unto him, "Fear not, thou shalt not die." Gideon, in the first feeling of gratitude, raised an altar to the Lord, whom he addressed by the name of Jehovah Shalom, the "God of peace;" and forthwith prepared himself for accomplishing the important and very arduous task to which the voice of Heaven had called him.

His first achievement was the destruction of an altar of Baal, which seems to have belonged to his father's establishment. On the approach of night, he took ten of the servants on whom he could rely, and proceeded to demolish the idolatrous pile; in place of which he built an

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seven years old; and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it; and build an altar unto the Lord thy God, upon the top of this rock, in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down."* In reference to this occurrence Saurin writes as follows: "Il etoit defendu expressément des faire des sacrifices sur d'autres autels que sur celui qui etoit dans le Tabernacle. Mais Dieu qui etoit l'auteur de cette loi avoit dispensé Gideon de la pratiquer. Une meme solution desculpe de sept autres irregularités qui les Rabbins ont trouvées dans son sacrifice: comme d'avoir offert des victimes durant la nuit: comme d'avoir allumé du feu d'un bois pris dans un bocage: comme d'avoir pris des taureaux, qu'on engraissoit depuis sept années, pour etre immolés a Bahal: cette derniere particularité a eté imaginée par les Docteurs Juifs, et n'est pas mieux prouvée que ce que dit Theodoret, que ces taureaux etoient entretenus depuis que l'oppression avoit commencé, c'est a dire depuis sept années, qu'ils devoient l'etre pendant tout le temps que elle dureroit, et etre sacrifiés ensuite par les Israelites a l'honneur du Dieu de leur deliverance." —*Gideon demolit l'autel de Bahal.* Discours. xii.

* Judges vi. 25, 26.

altar to Jehovah, and offered a burnt sacrifice. In the morning, when the people of Ophrah perceived what had been done, they gave way to the most furious passion; and learning that the sacrilegious act had been performed by Gideon, they demanded that his life should be made the forfeit of his crime. Joash, interested for the safety of his son, and forgetting for the moment his own attachment to the forbidden worship, had recourse to an argument for appeasing the multitude, which seems on more than one occasion to have turned their stupid minds to reflection. "If Baal be a god," said he, "let him plead for himself;" let him avenge his own cause; and do not you dishonour a celestial power by interposing your rage and clamour to defend him against a mere man. From this occurrence Gideon obtained the name of *Jerubbaal*, which means the opposer of that false god, or rather, perhaps, Let Baal defend himself.*

Being thus exposed to the marked enmity of the idolaters, Gideon found that he must now openly avow the great interests which he had secretly engaged to support. His zeal was farther inflamed by a movement on the part of the enemy; who, having collected their forces, passed

* Ce furent ces paroles que Joas prononça alors *Que Bahal defende lui-meme sa querelle* qui hic fournirent l'occasion de donner au Gedeon un nom pris de la circonstance, dans laquelle il lui avoit eté imposé; ce nom est celui de ירבעל, *Jerubbahal*, qui veut dire que *Bahal se defende*. Il est vrai que nous trouvons dans le second livre de Samuel que Gedeon est appellé ירבשת Jerebbesheth, au lieu de Jerubbaal; mais c'est que les Juifs marquoient souvent en faisant quelque changement au nom des Idoles, le mepris qu'ils avoient pour elles. C'est ce qui les porta a dire *besheth*, qui signifie *confusion*, au lieu de *Bahal* qui signifie *Seigneur*, et qui etoit le nom des Dieux mâles parmi pleusiurs peuples, comme Astaroth etoit celui des Dieux femelles. C'est aussi la raison pour laquelle un fils de Saul, qui est appellé אשבעל *Eschbaal* dans le premier livre des Chroniques, est nommé aussi איש בשת *Ish-bosheth*, dans le second livre de Samuel. De même, un fils de Jonathan qui est nommé מריב בעל *Merib-baal* dans le premier livre des Chroniques, porte communément celui de Mephibosheth.

over into the valley of Jezreel, a district of the country on the western side of Jordan, which belonged to the half tribe of Manasseh. Upon hearing of this renewed invasion, the son of Joash began his military career by inviting his own kindred to assist him in repelling the barbarian herdsmen. He blew a trumpet, saith the Scripture, and Abiezer was gathered after him. He next sent messengers to the several adjacent tribes; exhorting them to take up arms in defence of their property and lives, which had so long been at the mercy of the most furious of their enemies. Manasseh, Zebulun, Asher, and Naphtali, obeyed his call; and forthwith assembled round his banner, to the amount of thirty-two thousand men.*

But Gideon, while he encouraged others, was himself not altogether free from secret apprehension as to the result of his perilous undertaking. Perhaps it was only to obtain for those who followed him an unambiguous token of the Divine concurrence, that he ventured to solicit the farther assurance of such a miracle as he should ask to be performed. That dew should fall on a fleece of wool, while the ground on which it was laid continued dry, is a phenomenon which strictly accords with the laws of nature, and has been fully established by modern experiment; but that the same fleece should be dry, while the earth around was moistened by a deposition from the atmosphere, is a fact which certainly implies a suspension of those affinities which determine the relations of all physical bodies. In the former case there was no miracle, for the distinction alluded to may be observed every night that dew falls on the earth; but in the latter alternative, the interposition of Heaven was most manifest, for wool having a

* Judges vi. 33, 34, 35.

much stronger attraction for moisture than common dust or clay has, it was not natural that the fleece should be dry when there was dew on all the ground.*

Having no longer any doubt that Jehovah was on his side, and that the victory, with which his arms were about to be crowned, was to proceed from the blessing of heaven, he readily adopted a suggestion communicated to him from above, for impressing upon the minds of his soldiers the same salutary conviction. "The Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved

* In the able "Essay on Dew," by the late Dr. Wells, there are mentioned a great many interesting facts concerning the formation of that liquid on wool and other filamentous substances. "In my first attempts to compare the quantities of dew formed during different times or in different situations, I attended only to the appearance which it made on bodies having smooth surfaces. But quickly seeing this method to be very imperfect, I next employed wool to collect dew from the atmosphere, and found it well adapted for my purpose, as it readily admits among its fibres the moisture which forms on its outer parts, and retains what it receives so firmly, that I never but once had occasion to suspect that it suffered any portion of what it had thus acquired to pass entirely through it.

"In the observations hitherto given by me on the cold connected with dew, the temperature of grass has been chiefly considered, partly because my first experiments had been made upon it, and partly from a wish which arose afterwards, to compare my own experiments with those of Mr Six, which had been confined to that substance. I found it, however, very useful to furnish the means of comparing the degrees of cold produced at night on the surface of the earth at different times and places; as its state on different nights, on the same parts of the plat I commonly made use of, and in different parts of the plat on the same nights, was often very unequal, in point of height, thickness, and fineness, all of which circumstances influenced the degree of cold produced by it. I observed, in consequence, a much greater degree of uniformity in the results of experiments made with various other bodies, whose condition when first exposed to the air was always the same. Of these the most productive of cold were the filamentous and downy; as wool of moderate fineness, very fine raw silk, very fine unspun cotton, fine flax, and swandown, all of which were not only more steadily cold, upon clear and calm nights, than grass, but also gave rise to a greater degree of cold than was almost at any time observed upon it even in its best state."—*Essay on Dew, and Several Appearances connected with it, by William Charles Wells, M.D.*

us."* To reduce his numbers, the son of Joash was instructed to give permission to all who were fearful or faint-hearted to leave his ranks; a liberty which was embraced by no fewer than twenty-two thousand of his followers. But ten thousand brave men still presented a formidable band; equal in numerical strength to the troops of Barak who defeated the immense host of Sisera; and probably, when under the direction of a resolute leader such as Gideon, not at all inferior to the tumultuous hordes of Midian and Amalek. It was, therefore, necessary that they should be reduced to so small a body that the dullest eye might perceive, and the hardest heart might feel, that the yoke was taken off the necks of Israel by the hand of the Lord. The warriors selected to fight the battle were, accordingly, limited to three hundred.†

I have no intention to repeat the absurd conjectures of the Rabbinical writers relative to the expedient which was finally adopted by Gideon, for discovering those amongst his men whom Jehovah should be pleased to employ in the overthrow of the Midianites. Some have regarded the manner of drinking which distinguished the three hundred combatants as a proof of their courage and impatience to engage the enemy; while others have drawn from their hurried mode of quenching their thirst, a conclusion directly the reverse.‡ Hence it has been inferred, that the Almighty, who had resolved to make his strength perfect in the weakness of man, selected from the sons of Manasseh, Asher, and Zebulun, the greatest cowards that were to be found in their ranks. But it is enough to observe, that our knowledge of ancient manners is much too limited to furnish us with the moral or physical

* Judges vii. 2. † Judges vii. 8. ‡ Judges vii. 5, 6.

references upon which the test of Gideon was established; while it is extremely probable, notwithstanding the mysterious import ascribed to it by the Rabbins, that it was nothing more than an arbitrary sign, by which the smaller number might be separated from the greater.

Although the son of Joash relied on Divine aid, he did not despise the more ordinary means of success which arise from human skill and experience. His resolution to attack the Midianites during the night was not more wisely planned than it was vigorously executed; and it is not perhaps unreasonable to suppose, that his intention of surprising the enemy in the dark, surrounded by their families and flocks, was in some degree connected with the previous measure of reducing his immediate followers to the convenient number, whom he armed with trumpets, lamps, and pitchers.* Nor does it appear that he actually dismissed the rest of the army; for, as soon as the Midianites were thrown into confusion and had commenced their retreat, he sent orders to the men of Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh, to pursue them and complete the victory.† Others were despatched to secure the passes of the Jordan, in order to prevent the escape of the fugitives; and hence we may see, that although the nocturnal stratagem was effected by three hundred chosen men under the personal command of Gideon, the army of the combined tribes was not allowed to remain altogether idle.

The ardour of Gideon was well sustained by the sons of Ephraim; who, taking possession of the fords, intercepted the routed Midianites on the western bank of the river. Here two of the princes, Oreb and Zeeb, fell into the hands of the conquerors, who immediately struck off

* Judges vii. 16, 17, 18. † Judges vii. 23.

their heads, and sent them to the victorious general on the opposite side of Jordan.* But to this commander the victory still appeared incomplete as long as any of the chiefs of Midian survived. Zebah and Zalmunna had succeeded in crossing the river, and in carrying with them towards their own country a considerable body of their men. Gideon followed in their footsteps at the head of his chosen band; giving instructions, we may presume, to hasten the advance of his main army, now encouraged by their recent success against the broken and scattered forces of their cruel oppressors. A battle ensued, which ended in the total discomfiture of Zebah and his colleague; who, with fifteen thousand Ammonites, expiated by their deaths the wrongs which their countrymen had inflicted upon Israel, during a domination of seven long years.

But the splendid success of Gideon was not a little darkened by the severities which, according to the manners of his age, he thought it not unbecoming his high rank to inflict, as well upon the chief men of the enemy's camp, as upon certain cities which were not sufficiently forward to aid him in his pursuit of the confederate kings. The punishment with which he visited the churlishness of the princes of Succoth is not well understood. He threatened to tear their flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers; and it is added, that when he returned from Karkor, where he defeated Zebah and Zalmunna, "he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he taught the men of Succoth."† Some have imagined that this chastisement was similar in its nature to the mode of treating prisoners which is described in the twelfth chapter of the second

* Judges vii. 25. † Judges viii. 7, 16.

book of Samuel; where it is said of David, that "he brought out the people that were in Rabbah, and put them under saws and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick kiln."* Gideon also threw down the tower of Penuel, and slew the men of the city, for having, like the inhabitants of Succoth, refused him supplies of food and other refreshments, when he crossed the Jordan after his victory in the valley of Moreh.

The gratitude of the Israelites on this occasion had no other effect than to suggest to their infatuated minds the commission of a great crime. Forgetting that Jehovah was their king, and that as his chosen people they were under his special guidance and protection, they proposed to make Gideon the sovereign of all their tribes, and even to establish the royal authority in his house for all generations. The victorious Abiezrite declined this impious honour; assuring them that neither he nor his son would usurp the government which the Lord had reserved unto himself. The only return which he consented to receive for his important services, were the collars and earrings which they found on the bodies of the slaughtered Midianites; and of these he made an ephod, which he placed in his own city, even in Ophrah.†

There is among commentators the usual difference of opinion in regard to the form and intention of this ephod. Spencer maintains that the sacred historian did not only mean to inform his readers that Gideon devoted a part of the spoil to the decoration of a sacerdotal robe, but, moreover, that he set up in the city of his father a complete

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* 2 Samuel xii. 31. See also 1 Chronicles xx. 3.

† Judges viii. 24, 27.

establishment of images and priests for the worship of Jehovah. According to this view, the gold which the son of Joash collected among his soldiers was used not merely for decking the linen garments; it is supposed to have been set apart for making the *teraphim*, which occupied a place in the construction of the ephod, and also the cherubim which encompassed the altar in the house of God at Ophrah. Leclerc, who opposes the notion of Spencer in regard to the teraphim, admits, nevertheless, that the phrase *to make an ephod*, as used by the inspired historians, generally denotes the formation of an entire sacerdotal establishment. As the ephod must have had the accompaniment of Urim and Thummim, which, according to all theories on the subject, were composed of very expensive materials, the name of that piece of dress might thus come to represent the whole furniture of a chapel; and were we to agree with the author of the work on the Ritual Laws of the Hebrews, in believing that the little images called teraphim were inserted amidst the folds of the linen breastplate, we should see a still stronger reason why so important a part of the consecrated apparatus should be made to stand for the whole.*

I have mentioned, in an earlier part of this work, that the Hebrews did not think themselves chargeable with idolatry when they worshipped Jehovah through the medium of images. Neither Micah nor Gideon had any intention of forsaking the Lord or of returning to the ado-

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* Ephod fuisse pallium sacerdotale, cui adnexum erat pectorale gemmis distinctum. Hinc factum ut *facere Ephod* perinde sit ac instituere sacerdotium, quod videre est etiam inferius, cap. xviii. 4. ubi de Micha. Igitur hic scriptor sacer hoc indicare vult, Gedeonem, in urbe Ophrah, instituisse sacerdotium a Levitico distinctum; nam familia Aharonis a Mosis ævo Epodum seu pallium sacrum servaverat, et sacra ad Tabernaculum Conventûs facere sola debebat.—*Joh. Cler. Comment. in Judicum cap. viii.*

ration of Baal and Ashtaroth. On the contrary, they made an offering of their wealth to the Almighty in a feeling of pure gratitude; endeavouring even to rival, in their domestic temples, the splendour of Shiloh and the magnificence of the tabernacle. That the son of the Abiezrite did not abandon the true faith, is manifest from the narrative in which his history is concluded. We are there informed, "that the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon; and that it was not till Gideon was dead that the children of Israel turned again and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god." The Scripture, indeed, conveys no direct disapprobation of his conduct, in the matter of the ephod; but simply intimates, that, at a future period, the thing became a snare unto the house of Gideon.*

Another opportunity will occur for entering into the question which respects the identity of this great commander with the Jerombalus, who, in Sanchoniatho, is called the "priest of God," and from whom the writer just named is supposed to have received much important information.† Meantime we proceed to follow the train of events which characterized the condition of the Hebrews, in the years which immediately succeeded the rest procured for his people by the hand of the valiant descendant of Abiezer.‡

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* Judges viii. 27, 28, 31. † Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. lib. 1. cap. 10.

‡ The following mystical interpretations of this passage of Scripture, as amusing as they are instructive, will enable the reader to form some notion of the manner of expounding holy writ which was at one time highly patronized by the most learned divines. The action of Gideon, when threshing the corn, shadowed forth the good man who distinguishes vice from virtue, who avoids the one and practises the other. The press where Gideon performed this operation, according to St Augustin, is a type of the tribulations which afflict the church; the corn being an emblem of the *faithful* whom Jesus Christ separates with his rod or cross from the rest of the world. The same writer adds, that the angel represented our Lord, and the tree under which

The offer of sovereignty which was rejected by Gideon himself, appears to have excited the ambition of one of his illegitimate sons, whose name was Abimelech. This aspiring youth was jealous of his brothers, whose purer lineage entitled them more directly to the inheritance of their father's influence; and having determined to raise himself to power on the ruins of his family, he began his wicked career by putting them all to death, with the exception of the youngest. His mother being a native of Shechem, he found in that city a number of partizans; who as regardless as himself of humanity and justice, issued forth to support his cause by murder and robbery.*

I must rest satisfied with referring the reader to the ingenious apologue, which Jotham, the son of Gideon, addressed to the men of Shechem upon finding that they had conferred upon Abimelech the title of king. It has been regarded by many authors as the oldest composition of this nature that has reached our times; and assuredly,

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the former sat at Ophrah represented the cross. The stone on which Gideon placed the things which he had prepared was likewise a type of the Redeemer, for it is written by the apostle that *that rock* was Christ. The fire which proceeded from the mystic rock was the *fire of charity*; for it is said in St Luke, "I am come to send fire upon earth, and what will I if it be already kindled?" St Gregory remarks that the name Gideon signifies *he who is in the belly*, and was, of course, a type of the incarnation. The fleece of Gideon, according to Cornelius à lapide, was an emblem of the Virgin Mary, who received all Jesus Christ into her bosom as the fleece received all the dew. The three hundred men denoted the cross; for the letter *thau* in Hebrew signifies *three*, and it is like a cross in its form. These men therefore gained the victory, because it is said, Matth. xvi. 24., "If any one will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me." The trumpets of Gideon were the preachers of the gospel; the lamps pointed out the glory of their miracles; and the pitchers the frailty of their bodies. Nay, the wives of Gideon, his seventy sons, his concubine, and his natural son, were all types of Christ. The wives typified the multitude of the nations which are to acknowledge the Messiah; the sons denoted the *peoples*, of whom there are seventy tongues; the concubine was an emblem of the synagogue; and the natural son was the image of Antichrist. This is the opinion of Petrus Damianus.—See *Saurin*, Discours xiii.

* Judges ix. 1—4.

whatever ground there may be for such an opinion, there can be no doubt of its excellence as a piece of writing, as well as of its suitableness to the occasion on which it was employed. But the inhabitants of Shechem soon found other reasons to repent of their choice, and were the first to join in a conspiracy against Abimelech. Placing themselves under the command of Gaal, the son of Ebed, the Shechemites shut their gates, and denied all allegiance to the king whom they had so recently exalted to the throne. They even dared the horrors of a siege; but not being able to withstand the impetuosity of Abimelech, they fell into his hands, and suffered the penalty of treason. "He took the city and slew the people that were therein, and beat down the city and sowed it with salt." The house of Baal afforded the last retreat to the vanquished insurgents. Abimelech was on the point of storming that stronghold, when a woman from the wall threw down upon his head a piece of millstone, which wounded him mortally. "Then he called hastily unto the young man his armour-bearer, and said, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him. And the young man thrust him through, and he died.*"

The son of Gideon has not been thought worthy of a place in the list of the Judges; those patriotic characters who, holding their private interests subordinate to the welfare of their country, devoted their wealth and talents to the public good. The succession in this high office was continued by Tola, the son of Puah, an eminent individual of the tribe of Issachar. We have not the means of ascertaining the precise date in which he assumed

* Judges ix. 53, 54.

the government; and sacred history relates nothing more of him than that his residence was at Shamir, in mount Ephraim, and that he ruled the children of Israel twenty-three years.*

Jair the Gileadite was next entrusted with the administration of the Hebrew commonwealth. He was the first judge chosen from a tribe beyond the Jordan; but whatever might be the extent of his zeal and ability in the government of his people, his brief history reflects no distinguished honour on the place of his birth. His own family appears to have engrossed more of his cares than he bestowed on the concerns of the public; for he had thirty sons, who, in token of their authority, rode on thirty ass colts, and had thirty cities which bore their name during several generations.†

His death, however, was the signal for a general relapse into idolatry throughout all the land of the Hebrews; for immediately after his demise "the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord and served him not." To punish his people for this gross defection, Jehovah stirred up against them two powerful enemies, the Philistines on the west, and the Ammonites on the east. Nor did the latter satisfy themselves with the incursions which they made upon Reuber and Gad; but crossing the river in great numbers, they attacked also the stronger tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim. They continued their vexations, too, not less than eighteen years; so that the children of Israel, as was

* Judges x. 1, 2. † Judges x. 3, 4, 5.

usual with them in their distress, cried unto the Lord, and confessed before him their various idolatries.*

The text of Scripture on which is founded the length of the Ammonitish servitude, is indeed somewhat obscure, and has consequently led to a considerable difference of opinion in regard to its actual duration. "And that year they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel eighteen years, all the children of Israel that were on the other side Jordan in the land of the Amorites which is in Gilead." From this statement, some have even concluded that the year mentioned by the historian was the eighteenth from the commencement of the servitude; while those who adopt the chronological scheme of Usher, understand it to be the eighteenth year from the death of Jair: the servitudes, according to this system, being always included in the rests or pacifications which follow them.†

Exhausted by the oppression of their enemies, the Hebrews resolved, with the aid of that Divine succour which their penitence gave them reason to expect, to meet them in the field of battle: and so we find, that, when the Ammonites gathered themselves together and encamped in Gilead, the children of Israel assembled themselves together and encamped in Mizpeh. But this body of volunteers were without a head; and they were sensible that their total inexperience in war would render them an easy prey to their more martial neighbours. To secure a chief, therefore, whose talents might direct their strength and courage to a good issue in the approaching conflict, they made known, by proclamation throughout the land, that whosoever should lead them successfully against the chil-

* Judges x. 6—10.

† See Patrick's Commentary on Judges x. 8.; and Usher's Chronologia Sacra, part i. c. 13.

dren of Ammon, should be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.*

Jephthah, at the period in question, commanded a body of freebooters, who followed a wild and uncertain manner of living in the land of Tob. This person was the son of Gilead, a man of some consequence in that half tribe of Manasseh which had its inheritance on the farther side of the Jordan: but as his mother appears to have been a Canaanite, and not joined to the Hebrew people either by religion or regular matrimony, he was unfeelingly cast out by his brothers, and compelled to seek a maintenance in the pursuits of robbery and casual warfare. He is described in the Bible as the "son of a harlot;" but as in the language of the Jews, a strange woman and an impure woman were denoted by the same term, the expression just quoted is not to be taken in its most literal import.†

Jephthah listened to the proposal made to him by the chiefs of Gilead; and on condition of being elevated to the rank of their first magistrate on the conclusion of a successful war, he relinquished his ambiguous profession in the country of Tob, and proceeded to assume the command of the army in Mizpeh. And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them before me, shall I be your head? And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, The Lord be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words.‡

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* Judges x. 17, 18. † Judges xi. 1, 2, 3.

‡ Judges xi. 9, 10. To render this treaty binding they interposed the solemnity of an oath. The elders of Gilead called the Judge of all the earth to witness; and Jephthah, on his side, is said to have spoken all these words before the Lord in Mizpeh. It is true it is not easy to mark with precision the precise import of these words *before the Lord*. If the contract between Jephthah and the Gileadites had been made in a place where one might presume the ark of God was present, we should believe that Jephthah ratified

Being invested with a degree of power not inferior to that of a Roman dictator, Jephthah, either to prevent the effusion of blood, or to gain time for disciplining his rude army, began the discharge of his new office by sending deputies to the king of Ammon. He demanded from that prince an explanation of the grounds upon which he had commenced hostilities, and inflicted so many wrongs upon the people of Gilead. The Ammonite replied, that the land of which he had taken forcible possession belonged of right to his kingdom; that the Israelites, in their march from Egypt, had wrested it from his ancestors; and that, as he had now recovered the greater part of it, he expected to be allowed to enjoy a peaceable and undisputed occupancy. The Hebrew judge urged in return the length of time that had elapsed since the first conquest of the district took place; during which no claim had been made by the children of Ammon, either by ambassadors, or at the head of an armed force, to have their lands restored: and he maintained, that, as they had permitted three hundred years to pass without once calling in question the right of the Israelites, they had no longer any title to the territory which their fathers were not able to defend. "Wherefore," he

this treaty before that symbol of the Divine Majesty. But we do not find any thing in the narrative which can favour this hypothesis. Could it therefore be the intervention of any prophet which made the historian say that the thing passed *before the Lord*; or is it likely that the transaction took place in one of those buildings or inclosures which Joseph Mede calls *Proseuchæ* or *Prayeries*? Without stopping to weigh the probability of either of these conjectures, I may remark, that the Jews explained the expression *before the Lord*, by recording an ancient maxim of their people which is not unworthy of attention. They say that the שכינה, or *Divine Presence*, *rests on every place where the whole congregation of Israel is assembled together*. Perhaps our Saviour alluded to this very maxim; perhaps also he wished to raise the advantages of the Christian church above those which the synagogue arrogated to itself, when he said, that *wherever* TWO OR THREE *were gathered together in his name, he should be in the middle of them to bless them.*—See *Joseph Mede*, discourse xviii. *Jarchi on Judges xi.* 11., and *Saurin*, discours. xv. *Le Vœu et la Victoire de Jephthath.*

concluded, "I have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me: the Lord the judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon. Howbeit the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not unto the words of Jephthah which he sent unto him."*

But the general of the Gileadites, though he had done justice to the cause of his people on the principles of international law, seems to have had more confidence in his arms than in his logic or eloquence. "Wilt thou not possess," said he to the idolater, "that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever the Lord our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess."† We have already appealed to the fortune of war, and we must abide by the decision. Jehovah is the Lord of hosts; and we who worship him will receive, as from his hand, whatsoever he shall enable us to conquer. Let Chemosh thy god support his own cause; and let the children of Ammon extend their territory as far as he shall prosper them in their warlike enterprise.

Finding that all negociation was fruitless, he resolved to advance against the invaders; while they, trusting in their numbers more than in their vigilance or discipline, continued in camp to await his attack. "The spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon." The rapidity of this march so entirely disconcerted the Ammonites, that Jehovah delivered them into his hands after an easy and decisive victory: for he smote them from Aroer, even till thou come to Minnith, even twenty

* Judges xi. 27, 28. † Judges xi. 24.

cities, and unto the plains of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter.*

The joy of his success was soon damped by an incident which has given to his victory over Ammon a painful celebrity. Before he took the field he bound himself by a vow that, if he should succeed in vanquishing the enemy, he would devote, as a burnt-offering unto the Lord, the first creature that should come out of his house to meet him on his return. "If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hand, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering."† The result is known to every reader. His daughter, an only child, went forth with timbrels and dances to welcome the conqueror of the Ammonites, and thereby made herself the victim of his rash vow. "And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low; for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back." Being made acquainted with her fate, she requested only a reprieve of two months, to prepare herself by certain solemnities for discharging with propriety the appalling obligations of the paternal oath. "And it came to pass, at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to the vow which he had vowed."‡

It has long been a question among antiquaries and commentators, whether Jephthah really took away the life of his daughter, or whether he merely bound her to celibacy as a devoted servant in the tabernacle of Jehovah.

* Judges xi. 32, 33. † Judges xi. 30, 31. ‡ Judges xi. 39.

The narrative of the sacred historian is undoubtedly so constructed as to create the belief that the son of Gilead did actually immolate his child, and thereby, through a mistaken sense of religion, render himself guilty of the greatest crime that a human being could be tempted to commit. But we are informed, by Biblical critics, that the Hebrew conjunction, translated *and* in our version, might be translated *or;* and then, by the tenor of his vow, Jephthah might be understood as binding himself to sacrifice unto the Lord whatever creature belonging to his house should first meet him on his return from a successful campaign, provided it were of such a description as the Divine law permitted to be laid on the altar: and if not, that it should be devoted or set apart for the constant service of the Almighty in the manner most suitable to its nature and powers. According to this view of the question, the words used by the Gileadite should be rendered thus; "whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, *or* I will offer it up for a burnt-offering."

But there does not appear to be such a decided opposition or contrast between the two clauses of the sentence, as to require the use of the disjunctive *vau*. Jephthah promises, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of his house to meet him, shall be the Lord's, that is, shall be devoted to Jehovah; and are we to imagine that the animals offered up in sacrifice were not so entirely devoted as to be the Lord's in the fullest sense of the term? Had Jephthah said, that whatsoever should come out of the doors of his house to meet him, should be either resigned to the tabernacle, or offered up by him as a burnt-offering, we should at once have perceived the distinction, and, of course, the propriety of translating *vau* as a disjunctive

particle. But as there is no direct opposition between *being the Lord's*, and *being offered up* in sacrifice to the Lord, I cannot see the force of the argument which is founded upon the verbal criticism now mentioned. Nay, as the former member of the alternative proposition in this case evidently includes the latter, the second can only be regarded as an explanation of the first; and hence Jephthah must be understood as declaring that he would devote to the Lord whatsoever first presented itself to him on his return, and give it up in the particular form of a burnt-offering.

We find, accordingly, that all the versions, Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Arabic, follow the notion that Jephthah bound himself to immolate, on the altar of God, whatever living thing belonging to his household he should first observe advancing from his door, when he returned a conqueror from the Ammonitish war. The Seventy have rendered the passage thus: Και ηυξατο Ιεφθαε ευχην τω κυριω και ειπεν. Εαν διδους δως μοι τους υιους Αμμων εν τη χειρι μου, και εσται ο εκπορευομενος ος αν εξελθη απο της θυρας του οικου μου εις συναντησιν μου εν τω επιστρεφειν με εν ειρηνη απο υιων Αμμων, και εσται τω κυριω, ανοισω αυτον ολοκαυτωμα.

The Vulgate proceeds upon the same view of Jephthah's intentions: Votum vovit Domino, dicens; Si tradideris filios Ammon in manus meas, quicunque primus fuerit egressus de foribus domus meæ, mihique occurrerit revertenti cum pace a filiis Ammon, eum holocaustum offeram Domino.

Josephus, too, who could not fail to know the opinions of his countrymen and to be well acquainted with their traditions, states, in the plainest language, that the daughter of Jephthah was put to death. He remarks, that the Gileadite blamed his dutiful child for being so forward to come out to meet him, for he had vowed to sacrifice her to

God. "However," he adds, "this action that was to befall her was not ungrateful to her, since she was to die upon occasion of her father's victory, and the liberty of her fellow-citizens. She only desired her father to give her leave for two months to bewail her youth with her countrywomen; and then she consented, that, at the end of the fore-mentioned time, he might do with her agreeably to his vow. Accordingly, when that time was over, he sacrificed his daughter as a burnt-offering; presenting such an oblation as was neither conformable to the law nor acceptable to God; not weighing with himself what opinion the hearers would have of such a practice."*

In fact, the current of Jewish antiquity is decidedly in favour of the hypothesis which represents this young woman as yielding up her life to accomplish the object of her father's superstition; and if such sacrifices had not occasionally taken place, it is not easy to conjecture whence the belief of Hebrew authors could have originated, or on what ground it could have been so long maintained. The principal objections urged by modern writers against the conclusion that Jephthah's daughter was actually sacrificed, are drawn from the spirit of the Mosaical law, which positively prohibited all such immolations, and even described them as being most offensive in the sight of the Lord. The son of Gilead is esteemed by them as an enlightened man and a saint, who must consequently have understood the nature of the ritual economy under which

* Ὁ δε ἀνοιμωζας ἐπι τῳ μεγεθει του παθους κατεμεμφετο της περι την ὑπαντησιν σπουδης την θυγατερα· Καθιερωσαι γαρ αὐτην τῳ θεῳ καθυπεσχετο, τη δε το συμβησομενον ὀυκ ἀηδως προσεπεσιν, ἐπι νικη του πατρος και ἐλευθεριᾳ των πολιτων τεθνηξομενη· Παρεκαλεσε δε δυο μηνας αὐτῃ παρασχοντα προς το μετα των πολιτων ἀποθρνησαι την νεοτητα, τοτε ποιειν τα κατα την ἐυχην, συγχωρησας δε κατα τον προειρημενον χρονον, μετα τουτον διελθοντα θυσας την παιδα ὡλοκαυτωσεν, ὀυτε νομιμον ὀυτε τῳ Θεω κεχαρισμενην θυσιαν ἐπιτελων.—*Flav. Joseph. Antiq. Jud.* lib. v. c. 7.

his people was placed; and who, as he put his trust in Jehovah, the Lord of hosts; and looked only to his assistance for success in the arduous contest in which he was about to be engaged, can hardly be supposed to have insulted the Divine purity by vowing to offer upon the altar a human victim.

But those who reason in this manner forget the religious character of the Hebrew people, at the very period when Jephthah ruled. The Scriptures inform us that they had not only forsaken Jehovah, and refused to serve him; but, moreover, that they had adopted the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines. Now the chief god of the children of Ammon was Moloch; that horrible idol to whom the Hebrews are known to have offered up their sons and their daughters in the valley of Hinnom: and there is no reason to doubt, that the worship, which so often disgraced the chosen people at a later era, was sometimes practised in the days of the judges. It is perfectly manifest, too, that the Israelites were at all times disposed to ingraft upon their own divine ritual, the usages of the barbarian idolaters among whom they dwelt: and the tribes who had their inheritance beyond Jordan, by being farther removed from the seat of the national religion, were still more apt to be infected by the gross superstition of their neighbours. Jephthah, at the head of his freebooters, spent the greater part of his time on the borders of Ammon and of Moab; and the land of Tob, as it was situated beyond the confines of Israel, must have presented to the Gileadite a species of religious service which had very little resemblance to the more gentle ordinances of his native church.* Besides, the wor-

* Wells' Geography of the Old Testament, vol. ii. p. 50.

ship of Moloch was now general even among the Hebrews, who, as usual, endeavoured to combine it with the adoration of Jehovah; on which account, in weighing the motives, and determining the purpose of the Jewish commander, we must view his conduct with a reference to the actual state of religion in his own times, and not as compared with the true import of the Divine law, with which it is but too probable he was very little acquainted.*

It is maintained, by those who are unwilling to believe that Jephthah could imbrue his hands in the blood of his own child, that he merely devoted her to perpetual virginity, and gave her up to the high priest as a servant in the tabernacle. That women were employed in certain duties connected with the symbol of the Divine Presence, will not be denied by any one who has read with attention the books of Exodus and Numbers, as well as the first book of Samuel; but it is nowhere said, that these females were bound to celibacy, or that the period of their ministry among the priesthood was unlimited. But admitting, what has never yet been proved, that celibacy had already become a religious qualification in the women who embroidered the curtains, or washed the linen of the sanctuary, there remains the same difficulty as to the legal

* Jephthah, who had early been driven from his home, and had grown up to manhood among banditti in the land of Tob, might not know much of the laws of Moses, and probably was but a bad lawyer, and just as bad a theologian. The neighbouring nations used human sacrifices; and possibly, therefore, Jephthah, when he made the vow, may have thought of being met, not merely by a beast, but by a slave, whom, of course, he would sacrifice after the heathen fashion. His daughter, too, was heroic enough to fulfil it on her part; requesting only two months respite for the romantic purpose of going with her companions into lonely dales, there to lament that she must die a virgin. Then, after two months absence, this hapless maid, who, either from ambition or superstition, was a willing victim to her father's inconsiderate vow, actually returned; and Jephthah, it is said, *did with her as he had vowed*; which cannot well mean any thing else than that he put her to death.—*Michaelis' Commentaries on the Laws of Moses*, art. 145.

right of Jephthah to condemn his daughter for life to a servitude which she disliked, as there is to the hypothesis that his superstition carried him to the still more revolting cruelty of shortening her days. Viewed in the light supplied to us by the law of Moses, the conduct of Jephthah in either case must appear totally devoid of all countenance and authority; and as it is acknowledged by his defenders that he committed the smaller crime against the spirit of God's precepts, there is room left to suspect that he was capable of perpetrating the greater. Those, therefore, who rest their conclusions on the respect which Jephthah may be supposed to have entertained for the law of God, have assumed a false ground. The habits of his whole life were alienated from the religion of his country; and are, when considered simply in connection with his professional pursuits and associations, much more favourable to the hypothesis, that he bound himself before God to offer a sacrifice after the manner of the Ammonites.

But without dwelling any longer on the fact that his conduct was equally inconsistent with the law of Moses, whether he devoted his daughter to death or to perpetual virginity, I take the liberty to remark, that there is no proof of there ever having been vestals employed in the service of Jehovah either at the tabernacle or in the temple. The opinion of Dr Hales, therefore, founded on the occurrence mentioned in the thirty-first chapter of the book of Numbers, has no weight whatever. In the division of the booty taken in the first Midianitish war, a certain proportion was set apart for the uses of religion, and the support of the priesthood. "And the Lord's tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen. And the beeves were thirty and six thousand, of which the Lord's tribute was threescore and twelve. And the asses were thirty thousand and five hundred, of which the Lord's

tribute was threescore and one. And the persons were sixteen thousand, of which the Lord's tribute was thirty and two persons."*

This portion of the spoil, the sheep, the beeves, the asses, and the young women, was given "unto the Levites which kept the charge of the tabernacle of the Lord;" but there is not the slightest hint afforded, that the Midianitish maidens were to be consecrated to a holy service, and bound to continue for ever in a state of celibacy. In what way the Levites employed their share of the human booty we are nowhere distinctly informed; but we may be satisfied, in the first place, that if a class of females, similar to the vestals at Rome, had been thought necessary for conducting the service of Jehovah, special instructions would have been given relative to their institution; and, secondly, that the stated number would have been selected from the daughters of Israel, and not from the idolatrous bands of the captive Midianites.

Had Jephthah devoted his daughter to the Lord as a holy virgin, he must have delivered her up to the high priest who presided over sacred things at Shiloh; the place where the ark of the covenant was at that time stationed. But Shiloh was in the tribe of Ephraim, about ten or twelve miles from Neapolis or Sichem; and it is worthy of remark, that Jephthah, so far from being on good terms with the Ephraimites, declined to ask their assistance in the war against Ammon, and even directed his arms against them immediately upon his return from the battle of Mizpeh. The men of Ephraim, offended at the slight put upon them by this commander, threatened to burn his house over his head with fire.† Jephthah attempted to excuse

* Numbers xxxi. 37, 38, 40. Hales, vol. ii. p. 318. † Judges xii. 1.

himself; but finding that his apology was rejected, he gathered his confederates together, seized the passes of Jordan, and slew of the Ephraimites not fewer than forty-two thousand men.*

This civil broil succeeded almost immediately to the campaign in which the maid of Gilead was devoted; and must have placed an insuperable bar in the way to any arrangement with the priest of Shiloh for receiving her into his establishment as a consecrated virgin, supposing this to have been her destination. It is not to be conceived that the high priest could have any concern in an offering made for a victory in which the tribe amongst whom he dwelt had not only had no share, but of which they had even been purposely excluded from all the honour and advantage; and it is not more probable that Jephthah would surrender his child to the service of a people whom he so lightly esteemed, and whose numbers he had so recently diminished with the edge of the sword.†

This view of the case invalidates, at the same time, one of the principal objections to the actual immolation of the young woman on an altar. It is said, that the high priest would not himself have performed such an office, nor even permitted it to be performed by any other person at the usual place of the Divine solemnities. But the supposition on which we are now proceeding removes this difficulty. Jephthah, it is to be feared, did not seek the intervention of God's minister. Like Abraham, he himself probably stretched forth his hand to slay his child: and although, under the law, such an act on his part was grossly irregular, as well as horribly inhuman, there is yet no doubt that such violations of the rule laid down by Moses

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*. Judges xii. 2—6.

† See Michaelis' Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, vol. ii. art. 145.

were of very frequent occurrence. We find that Gideon, who was no priest, was permitted to offer a burnt-offering on an altar which he had erected for the special purpose; and other instances may be collected from the sacred pages, particularly at the time when every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*

* If Jephthah was bound to offer his daughter, who should be employed in that work? Should the priests? But their business was rather to persuade and deter him from what he had imprudently vowed. Should the magistrates? But they could not be ignorant that God had forbidden such sacrifices. Should Jephthah himself? But this would have argued him as void of common sense as of natural affection!—*Patrick's Commentary on Judges xi.* 39.

To avoid prolixity, I have refrained from giving the opinions of many writers whose names are familiarly connected with the question of Jephthah's vow. Lightfoot, for instance, has taken a side in this controversy, and writes as follows:—

"His vow concerning his daughter, may be scanned in these particulars. I. That his vow, in general, was of persons; for, 1st, He voweth whatsoever should come out of the doors of his house; 2. Whatsoever should come to meet him: now it is not likely nor proper to understand this of sheep and bullocks; for who can think of their coming out of his house, much less of their coming to meet him. 3. How poor a business was it to vow to sacrifice a bullock or sheep for such a victory? Therefore his vow relateth to persons, and so might it be translated, *Whosoever* cometh forth. II. What would he do with his vowed person? Make him a Nazarite? He might vow the thing, but the performance lay upon the person's own hand. Dedicate him to the sanctuary? Why he might not serve there, as not being a Levite. Sequester him from the world? He might indeed imprison him, but otherwise the sequestering from the world lay upon the person's own hand still. Suppose one of his married maid-servants or man-servants, or his own wife, had met him first, what would he have done with any of them? Therefore I am enforced, by the weighing of these and other circumstances in the text, to hold with them that hold he sacrificed his daughter indeed, though I have been once of another mind. And it seemeth that this was a part of the corruption of those times, and was but, *mutato nomine*, a sacrifice to Moloch the god of the Amorites, against whom he was now to fight when he maketh this vow.—*Lightfoot's Chronicle. Works*, vol. i. p. 51, fol. edit.

John Edwards held a similar opinion on this litigated point. Speaking of Jephthah, he remarks, that "He should have considered that an unlawful thing cannot possibly be made lawful by the interposition of a vow; yea, that it is a double sin to act unlawfully by virtue of a vow, for there is not only the sinful vow, but the sinful act that follows it. But so blind and partial is good men's zeal sometimes, that they are not in a capacity to attend to, at least not to regulate themselves by the most rational principles

Considerable stress has been laid on the expression used by the devoted maiden, when she craved of her father a short respite from her fate. She entreated that she might be

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that are offered them. This was the lot of our unhappy prince and warrior; he had conquered the Ammonites, but could not vanquish his own erroneous conceptions, his mistaken zeal, his misguided conscience. He knew that the law forbade human sacrifices, but he was so deluded as to believe that the religion of a vow superseded that prohibition. Wherefore he goes on perversely in the prosecution of his rash oath, and commands the poor reprieved virgin to be brought to the altar, and there to be offered up a burnt-offering to the Lord. Lest he should violate his sacred promise to God, he puts off the nature and pity of a man. To make good his single vow, he disregarded all the other obligations of reason and religion. Such, such is the impetuous force of a *misguided mind*, a *disordered* zeal."—*A Farther Enquiry into several Remarkable Texts of the Old and New Testament. By John Edwards, B. D.*

The reader may be amused with the following list of combatants, who, at different times, have taken their place in this arena. I shall begin with those who believe that Jephthah's daughter was doomed only to the service of the tabernacle, or, at most, to a life of seclusion. There are, on this side, the Rabbis Kimchi and Maimonides, Arias Montanus, Pagninus, Vatablus, Estius, Junius, Lodovicus de Dieu, Pool, Broughton, Perkins, Drusius, Grotius, Leclerc, Patrick, Heinsius, Selden, Saurin, Hales, and Gleig. But the adherents of the opposite opinion muster equally strong, at least in point of number. Josephus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Jerome, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine, Luther, Peter Martyr, Salianus, Serarius, Menochius, Ludovicus Cappellus, Lightfoot, Edwards, Jurieu, Michaelis, Jennings, and Burder. On a question where such names are opposed to one another, we must allow, that *adhuc sub judice lis est.*

I have taken no notice in the text, of the resemblance which the history of Jephthah's daughter bears to that of Iphigenia the daughter of Agamemnon. L. Cappellus is of opinion that the latter was borrowed from the former, and even that the Grecian maid obtained her name from the Hebrew judge, *quasi* Jephthigenia (ιεφθιγενια.) The similarity is no doubt striking, but we have no reason to believe that it is more than accidental. It is at the same time amusing, to find the heathen poet no less anxious than the Christian divine, to save the reputation of the father from the stain of innocent blood.

> Flentibus ante aram stetit Iphigenia ministris,
> Flexa Dea est, nubemque oculis objecit, et inter
> Officium turbamque sacri, vocesque precantum,
> Supposità fertur mutasse Mycenida cerva.
> Ergo ubi, quâ dicent lenita est cæde Diana
> Et pariter Phœbes, pariter maris ira recessit.
>
> *Ovid* xii. 31—36.

A story which, in some particulars, reminds us of Jephthah's vow, is mentioned by Servius in his commentary on the third book of the Æneid.

allowed to go into the mountains, and there, in the society of her companions, to *bewail her virginity*. It has been remarked, that if she had had before her eyes so frightful a death as we imagine, she would not have confined her regret to the mere circumstance of dying unmarried. But we may observe that the Jewish writers do not attach any importance to this supposed distinction. Josephus merely notices her request, as connected with the desire to prepare for an untimely end, *to bewail her youth*, or, in other words, to lament the hard destiny of being cut off in the midst of her days.*

If we turn to the Hebrew, and consider with attention the derivation of the word בתולי, we shall probably find, that the common translation does not convey the precise thought which passed through the mind of the inspired penman. The root בתל does not indeed occur as a verb in that language, but in the Arabic it signifies to sever, to cut off, to separate, or to remove. If used as a noun, בתל would denote the *act* of severing or cutting off; and בתול, on the same principle, must mean the *condition* or *state* of being cut off or severed; or, according to a very usual accommodation of human speech, the *thing* or *person* that is cut off or severed. Hence we find, that בתול signifies a shoot or sucker of the palm-tree ready to be severed from its parent stock, and to bear fruit of itself; and it is in

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When Idomeneus the king of Crete, and a descendant of Deucalion, was on his return home from the war of Troy, he was overtaken by a violent storm; during which he vowed to offer to the gods the object that should first meet him when he landed. It happened that his only son was the first to meet him, whom, as he was bound by his oath, he proceeded to offer as a sacrifice. There is doubt whether he actually perpetrated the crime; but as a pestilence arose soon after, which was ascribed to the wicked act or purpose of their king, the Cretans expelled him from the government.

* Παρεκαλεσε δε δυο μηνας αυτην παρασχοντα προς το μετα των πολιτων αποθρηνησαι την νεοτητα.—*Joseph. Antiq.* lib. v. c. 7.

agreement with this analogy, that a young marriageable female was denominated בתול or בתולת, who, to use the words of Parkhurst, *being separated from her mother, may now bear fruit of her own.**

This Hebrew term, it is therefore perfectly clear, denotes, in general, the *state* of being cut off or separated, or the *thing* which is cut off or separated. It signifies a virgin or marriageable woman only in a secondary or figurative meaning; the radical idea being that of cutting off, as the twig was cut off from the tree to be planted in a separate place. The word בתולי, accordingly, which was used by Jephthah's daughter, would literally signify *my cutting off;* or the state that awaited her in consequence of her father's vow, whether it were death or perpetual exclusion from the world. Nor is there any insuperable difficulty in the different form of the same word which occurs in the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth verses. In the first, it is unquestionably in the singular number; being the participial noun בתול, and the possessive pronominal affix subjoined to it. In the other, also, it ought probably to be written בתולת; which would denote *her cutting off* or separation, and would thereby at once accord better with the sense and with the context, than the ambiguous form בתוליה. To prove that there is ground for this criticism, it is only necessary to remark, that, in the very same verses, one word is spelled two different ways, ועתי, and ועיתי, only one of which can be right. Indeed, a very learned commentator marks the latter as an obvious mistake in orthography; intimating, at the same time, that the error had been detected and exposed by several writers before his day.†

If there be any soundness in the opinions now stated,

* Parkhurst's Heb. Lexicon, and Buxtorf. Lex. Chald. and Syriac.
† See Houbigant Notæ Criticæ in Judicum librum cap. xi.

we shall at least get rid of the ridiculous commentaries which have been so long copied by one author from another, on the import of the word *virginity* as used by the daughter of Jephthah. The French writer Jurieu, for example, who entertains no doubt in regard to her actual immolation, loses all patience when he comes to consider the wailings of the damsel. "She desired," says he, "two months to bewail her virginity; but what occasion was there for her bewailing her virginity, if she was to keep it for ever!"* There are authors, too, of greater name than the compiler of the Critical History, who have made observations on this narrative, neither more learned nor more decorous. Even Leclerc condescends to repeat the trifles of his predecessors; and Grotius, as well as Bishop Patrick, saw perfect reason to be satisfied that the tears of Jephthah's daughter were all shed for the loss of children which she never had, and for the privation of a matrimonial society which she never enjoyed. The ancients, on the contrary, both Jews and Christians, believed that the young woman was really offered up as a burnt-offering; and their arguments, connected with the direct and obvious bearing of the sacred narrative, appear to me more conclusive than those of modern commentators.†

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* Jurieu's History of the Doctrines and Worship of the Church, vol. i. p. 568.

† Sic Jephtæ illa (historia) filiam quam habuit unicam, temerarii voti (sed quod irrevocabile intellexit ex lege *Levit. xxvii.* 29.) religione post partam de Ammonitis victoriam, offerentis holocausto, Jud. xi. 31, &c. Quod docent forma voti, objectum ejusdem, executio respondens voto, Patris filiæque cum facta tum verba, statutum in Israële pro annuo *planctu*, vel annuo *celebratione* virginis, et circumstantiæ aliæ textûs: Præter consensum omnium versionum antiquarum, Fl. Josephi, Hebræorum veterum, Patrum, Eruditorum.—*Fred. Spanhemii Brevis Introductio ad Hist. Sacram*, p. 64. Edit. 1694.

Grotius admits, "Immolatam etiam ab Jephthe filiam multi credidêre Hebræorum Christianorumque: sed id de homine cujus fides prædicatur, Heb. xi. 32, mihi credibile non sit.—*Annotata ad Librum Judicum cap. xi.*

I have already alluded to the bloody contest which ensued between Jephthah and the Ephraimites, immediately after his return from the war with the children of Ammon. It is remarkable that a similar misunderstanding took place when Gideon, a great many years before the period at which we have now arrived, subdued the Midianites and slew their kings. Ephraim seems never to have perceived that his assistance could be of any use until after the occasion for taking the field had passed entirely by, and the enemy were completely routed; and then he murmured against the deliverer of Israel, merely because his people were deprived of their share of the honour and the spoils, which, in those days, usually rewarded a successful battle. Gideon flattered their pride, and induced them to remain quiet. "And he said unto them, what have I now done in comparison of you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer. God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then was their anger abated towards him when he had said that."*

Jephthah, unwilling to come to blows with them, attempted in like manner to soothe their minds; but their wrath, so far from being pacified, sought vent in the most opprobrious and insulting language. "Ye Gileadites, said they, are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites, and among the Manassites." The victorious commander, little accustomed to restrain his indignation or to value human life, resolved to inflict upon his querulous neighbours a signal chastisement. He gathered the men of Gilead together, and smote Ephraim in the field of battle; and having previously seized the passes of Jordan,

* Judges viii. 1, 2, 3.

he deprived his beaten adversaries of all means of retreat into their own land. And it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said nay, then said they unto him, say now Shibboleth; and he said Sibboleth, for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him and slew him at the passages of Jordan; and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.*

After the demise of Jephthah, who governed Israel six years, the administration of affairs was entrusted to Ibzan, a Bethlehemite. Some Jewish authors have imagined that this ruler of Israel must have been Boaz, the husband of Ruth, and father of Obed; but, to be satisfied that there is not the smallest ground for such an opinion, it is only necessary to recollect how many years, not less than three hundred, had elapsed since his mother Rahab was received into the congregation of the Hebrews. Of Ibzan, the sacred historian had nothing farther to record than that he was the parent of thirty sons and of as many daughters; whence we may conclude, that the victories of Gideon and Jephthah had secured to their country a peace so solid and lasting, that there was no need to have recourse to arms during the government of three successive judges.†

Elon succeeded this peaceful ruler, and seems to have discharged the duties of a supreme magistrate on the same prudent and unostentatious maxims. The reader of Scripture can have his curiosity gratified to no fuller extent than to learn, that the successor of Ibzan judged

* Shibboleth signifies *waters*; and when the Ephraimite said, *let me pass over*, they desired him to add *water*, which he could not pronounce without detection.

† Judges xii. 5, 6.

Israel ten years, and was at length buried in Aijalon, in the country of Zebulun.*

During the eight years which follow the time of Elon, the affairs of the Hebrew commonwealth were directed by Abdon, the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite. Like his predecessor Ibzan, this judge was more remarkable for his domestic magnificence, than for his public conduct. He had forty sons and thirty nephews, that rode on three-score and ten ass-colts; and when his days on earth were concluded, he was buried with suitable dignity at Pirathon, in the land of Ephraim, in the mount of the Amalekites.

After so long a period of rest and prosperity we are prepared to hear that the people of God were become as bad as such blessings were usually found to render them; forgetful of religious duties, and utter despisers of all moral obligation. The annalist, accordingly, relates that the "children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years."†

The deliverer whom Providence next raised up to redress the grievances of the elect people is, in many respects, the most extraordinary personage that appears in

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* Judges xii. 11, 12. In the first book of the Chronica of Eusebius, there is a singular note relative to Elon. Post Ebeson (Ibzan) in libro Judæorum fertur Judex Aelon rexisse populum annos x. qui non habetur apud lxx. Now it is worthy of being remarked, that none of those who have made the most minute and careful inquiries into this matter, have found a single copy of the Septuagint which does not agree with the Hebrew in mentioning Elon. And Eusebius himself, in the tenth book of his Evangelical Præparations, has inserted this Zebulunite in the list of the judges. Ἐπειτα Γεδεων, ἐτη μ'. Αβιμελεχ, ἐτη γ'. Θωλα, κ'γ'. Ιαειρ, κ'β'. Ἀμμανιται, ιη. Ιεφθαι, ἐτη ς. Εσβων, ἐτη ζ'. Αιλων, ἐτη, ι'. Afterwards, Gideon ruled forty years; Abimelech, three years; Thola, three and twenty; Jair, two and twenty; the Ammonites, eighteen; Jephthah, six; Ibzan, seven; Elon, ten.—*Euseb. Præp. Evan.* lib. x. cap. 14.

† Judges xiii. 1.

the ancient Scriptures. His character presents more points which it is almost impossible to reconcile with the notion of a theocratic government and of a divine commission, than any Hebrew ruler, either before or after him. In no other instance, do we find it so difficult to trace an affinity between the action and the motive, between the private conduct and the official authority. The sceptic, accordingly, has usually fixed on Samson as an object on whom he might pour the fullest torrent of abuse and ridicule; and through whom he might attack the most effectually the truth of religion and the inspiration of the Old Testament: while the believer, on the other hand, making too little allowance for the rudeness of antiquity and the influence of external circumstances on the human character, has, on some occasions, conducted his defence with so much want of skill, as to give additional strength to the cause of the enemy.

As all the actions of this Herculean judge were supernatural, the narrative of his life commences with a miracle. His mother, more desirous perhaps to gratify her natural wish for children, than to obtain from heaven a champion to protect the rights of her people, was assiduous in her prayers for a son. An angel was sent to announce to her that her supplications were heard; and that in due time she should become the parent of one who was destined to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines. "Now therefore beware, I pray thee," said the celestial messenger, "and drink not wine nor strong drink, and take not any unclean thing: for lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head; for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb."*

* Judges xiii. 3, 4, 5.

The father of Samson was named Manoah, a member of the family of Dan, and an inhabitant of Zorah, a small town belonging to his tribe. Hearing from his wife the pleasant news that his household was about to be increased, he entreated the Lord to send again the same angel, in order to repeat in his own presence the assurance of progeny. His prayer was granted, and the vision was once more communicated to both the parents; upon which, a scene, not unlike that which occurred in the case of Gideon, took place, and fully established the faith of the pious couple.* "Manoah took a kid with a meat-offering, and offered upon a rock unto the Lord: and the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar: and Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground."† The terror usual on such occasions seized the heart of the Danite; and he exclaimed, "we shall surely die, because we have seen God!" But his wife, already more familiar with the apparition, and convinced that the message was one of peace and favour, soothed his apprehensions. "If the Lord were

* Josephus narrates that Manoah was jealous of his wife, and was, on that account, not a little uneasy at the repeated visits which she received from the "young man." "Now the wife informed her husband when he came home of what the angel had said, and shewed so great an admiration of the beauty and tallness of the young man that had appeared to her, that her husband was astonished, and out of himself for jealousy and such suspicions as are excited by that passion. But she was desirous to have her husband's unreasonable sorrow taken away; accordingly she entreated God to send the angel again, that he might be seen by her husband. So the angel came again by the favour of God, while they were in the suburbs, and appeared to her when she was alone without her husband. She desired the angel to stay so long till she might bring her husband; and that request being granted, she goes to call Manoah. When he saw the angel, he was not yet free from suspicion, &c.—*Jewish Antiquities, Whiston's Translation*, book v. c. 8.

† Judges xiii. 19, 20, 21.

pleased to kill us," she replied, "he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands; neither would he have shewed us all these things; nor would, as at this time, have told us such things as these."*

There is no small obscurity in the works of chronologers with regard to the time when Samson was born; whether we wish to fix that period with relation to the age of the world, as Usher has done, or merely with respect to the succession of the other judges, as it has been attempted by Marsham. The former of these writers places the birth of the son of Manoah in the two thousandth eight hundredth and forty-ninth year from the creation; and maintains, on the ground of his general system, that the year just specified must have coincided with the first of the Philistine servitude. "It appears," says he, "from the thirteenth chapter of Judges, that he was conceived after the forty years of the oppression were begun; and we are expressly informed, in the fifteenth chapter of the same book, that he avenged Israel twenty years in the days of the Philistines: whence it follows that we must not date the nativity of Samson at a later pe-

* Judges xiii. 23. I have already alluded to the opinion so very general in all antiquity, sacred and profane, that the sight of a supernatural being was to be immediately followed by death. The following example of this feeling among gods and men is well known to the classical reader; and as it illustrates the portion of ancient Scripture now under consideration, he may not be displeased to see it quoted from his favourite Homer:—

Παντες δ' Ουλυμποιο καταλθομεν αντιοωντες
Τησδε μαχης, ινα μη τι μετα τρωεσσι παθησι
Σημερον. Υστερον αυτε τα πεισεται, ασσα οι αισα
Γεινομενω επενησε λινω, οτε μιν τεκε μητηρ.
Ει δ' Αχιλευς ου ταυτα θεων εκπευσεται, ομφης,
Δεισας' επειθ, οτι κεν τις εναντιβιον θεος ελθη
Εν πολεμω. Χαλεποι δε θεοι φαινεσθαι εναργεις.

Iliad. lib. xx. v. 125.

This is one of the passages in the great original, of which Pope has entirely mistaken the meaning.—See *translation of Mad. Dacier*, and the fourth volume of *Saurin's Discourses*, p. 24.

riod, unless we are determined to make him a judge before he was eighteen years of age."*

This reasoning is abundantly satisfactory so far as it respects the relative position of Samson's birth, viewed in reference to the commencement of the Philistine domination. But if it be examined as it bears upon the great questions of universal history and chronology, the conclusion which the archbishop draws from it will be found to labour under very weighty objections. The reader will admit, without hesitation, that Samson was born about the beginning of the sixth servitude; but if he has studied with attention the history of ancient nations, he will refuse to accede to the opinion of the learned prelate, that the deliverer of Israel first saw the light in the two thousand eight hundred and forty-ninth year of the world.

Sir John Marsham, on the other hand, asserts, that the sixth servitude was contemporaneous with the fifth; and that, while the eastern tribes were engaged in war with the Ammonites, or quietly submitted to their oppression, the western tribes were in subjection to the Philistines along all their borders. Duæ istæ servitutes non erant ut quatuor priores, tempore diversæ et successivæ, sed contemporaneæ: cœperunt ambæ simul, non desierunt; ob multiplicatam idolatriam duplicata est pœna, et ab utroque latere immittitur hostis. *Tradidit eos in manus Philistim, et in manus filiorum Ammon; et detriverunt et oppresserunt filios Israel in ipso* (eodem) *anno octodecim an-*

* A. M. 2849. Samson, Nazaræus, uti Angelus prædixerat, Zoræ natus est. Cum enim post cœptos annos 40 oppressionis Philistæorum conceptum illum fuisse constet; et ipsum viginti annis vindicasse Israelem in diebus Philistæorum (cap. xv. v. 20.) expresse doceamur: ultra hoc tempus nativitatem ejus non esse deferendam apparet, nisi ante 18 ætatis suæ annum, Vindicis eum officium suscepisse statuerimus.—*Ush. Annales Vet. et Nov. Test.* p. 26.

nos. Uno eodemque anno Ammonitæ ab oriente, Philistæi ab occidente, quasi fœderati, invaserunt Israelitas: non uno anno expulsi sunt: dominati sunt Ammonitæ annos 18, Philistæi autem 40.*

According to this hypothesis, the forty years of the Philistine oppression did not terminate till Samuel gained his celebrated victory at Ebenezer. Samson must therefore have been born about the time of Gideon; for Samuel, who was certainly younger than the son of Manoah, "began to judge," says this author, "in the last year of Elon the Zebulonite, and was contemporary with Abdon of Ephraim." If Sir John Marsham was right in his conjecture, we must believe that there were among the Hebrews four judges at one period, namely, Abdon, Samuel, Samson, and Eli; and, moreover, that they all exercised the government when the Philistines were lords of the country. Such a conclusion, as it has no support from fact, so does it appear to be at utter variance with historical probability. Besides, it is clearly inconsistent with the statement of St Paul, who assures us, that, from the division of the promised land to the days of Samuel, there intervened a period of four hundred and fifty years. We cannot therefore make our way through this chronological labyrinth without assuming that the servitudes were successive, and that none of the judges were contemporary, except Eli and Samson during a part of their administrations.

But it is time to resume the tenor of our narrative, and to give some account of the character and exploits of the powerful warrior who has just been named.

The sacred text informs us that "the spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the Camp-of-Dan, between

* Johan. Marshami Canon. Chron., p. 307, 308.

Zorah and Eshtaol."* In reference to this notice, the reader will remember that, when the Danites went out in search of a country to dwell in, six hundred of their number, appointed with weapons of war, proceeded from Zorah and Eshtaol, and went up and pitched in Kiriath-jearim in Judah; "wherefore," adds the inspired author, "they called that place Mahaneh-dan, the camp of Dan, unto this day."† In that wild and hilly region, Samson found the first opportunity to signalize his courage and uncommon strength against the enemies of his country; and his personal achievements appear to have attached to his name such a degree of notoriety, as to render him an object of dislike and terror to the inhabitants of the Philistine border. This observation will be illustrated by the event which follows.

To fulfil his destiny, and to avenge his people upon the Philistines, it came to pass that he fell in love with a young woman of that nation, who dwelt at Timnath in the tribe of Dan.‡ His parents, who did not know that this attachment was "of the Lord," objected to the union of

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* Judges xiii. 25.

† "The camp of Dan," says Howell, "was probably that place where the Danites made their encampment in their expedition and enterprise against Laish, Judges xviii. 11.; for it is not at all likely that the Philistines, who had the Israelites at that time entirely under their subjection, should suffer them to have any standing camp. And this, by the by, is a good argument that the story of Micah, and of the Danites' expedition, was transacted before Samson's time, though the compilers of the Bible have placed it after."—*Howell's History, apud Stackhouse.*

The camp of Dan is the same with Mahaneh-dan, the former being only the latter expressed in English. It is so called from the Danites encamping here on their expedition to Laish; and it was situated near Kiriath-jearim in Judah.—*Wells' Geog.* vol. ii. chap. 6. p. 364.

Dr Wells relates that both Eshtaol and Zorah were towns in the tribe of Dan, whereof the latter lay on the frontiers of Judah; and for this reason Rehoboam, upon the revolt of the ten tribes, seems to have kept this place, though lying in one of these tribes, and to have fortified it for a barrier town on that side of the kingdom of Judah; as he did also Aijalon, another town belonging to the same tribe.—*Wells' Geog. of Old Test.* vol. ii. chap. 6.

‡ It is not improbably thought to be the same that is in Joshua xv. 10.

their son with an idolater; but finding him resolute in his purpose to have her to wife, they agreed to accompany him to Timnath to ask the damsel in marriage. "And he went down and talked with the woman, and she pleased Samson well."

The preliminaries being settled, the marriage was solemnized with feasting, which, according to the custom of those remote times, continued seven days. It was usual, on such occasions, for the bridegroom to invite a number of his relatives and friends, who were appointed to do the honours of the ceremony, and to discharge certain other offices which the Rabbis describe with more minuteness than delicacy. But the fame of Samson supplied him with attendants who appear not to have been of his own choice; for it came to pass, when the Philistines saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him; and these, the Jews imagine, were sent, not so much with the view of paying a compliment to the stranger, as to be a guard over him lest he should make any disturbance.*

It was customary in those days to entertain the guests at marriage-feasts, and exercise their wit by proposing enigmas or riddles. Samson complied in this respect with the practice of his country; promising, that, if any of the persons should bring forward a solution in the course of seven days, he

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called Timnah, and Joshua xix. 43. Timnatha. It was first assigned to the tribe of Judah, and afterwards to the tribe of Dan. Hither it probably was that Judah, the patriarch of the tribe of Judah, went up to his sheep-shearers. Genesis xxviii. 12.—*Wells' Geog.* chap. vi. p. 364.

* Nam epulum a sponso, sive cœlibe ante, sive viduo, sive uxori etiamnum superstiti conjuncto, lætè lauteque erat celebrandum per dies a deductione minimum septem, ubi virgo erat sponsa (exemplo vetustissimo sumpto, tum ex Jacobi et Rahelis nuptiis, cum ex Samsonis) per triduum minimum ubi vidua seu vitiata ducebatur. Epulum illud ejusque celebrationem *Lætitiam nuptialem* appellitant. Adeoque hoc ex more exigi solitum, ut cui plures sponsæ essent simul deducendæ, is singulis uxoribus singulas epulas per totidem dies celebrare, idque lætissime, perquam pollucibiliter, et tum ab omni labore vacans, tum ab omnimodo solennis lætitiæ generi alio, quod forte genio tunc placere posset.—*Seldeni Uxor. Ebraic.* lib. ii. c. 11.

would reward his ingenuity with thirty sheets or under robes, and thirty change of garments. But, he added, if you cannot declare it unto me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments.

The riddle which he put forth had an allusion to an event which took place in one of his journeys to Timnath; when he slew a young lion, in the carcase of which he afterwards found a swarm of bees, and a quantity of honey. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong (fierce, or bitter,) came forth sweetness." By means of his wife, as every one knows, the Philistines solved the enigma; saying, "What is stronger than a lion, and what is sweeter than honey?" The observation of Samson is highly expressive of his disappointment and suspicion. "If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle." In addition to which, Josephus makes him exclaim, "And what is more perfidious than a woman?"*

This slight incident called forth the powers with which Samson was endowed for the relief, or, at least, for the revenge of his people. That he might be able to furnish the thirty robes, or sheets as they are called in our translation, and the thirty change of garments, which he had pledged to his bridal associates, he went down to Askelon, one of their own cities, slew thirty men, stripped them of their apparel, and laid the bloody spoil at the feet of their countrymen. Displeased, too, at the conduct of his wife in the affair of the riddle, and perhaps not altogether without suspicion of her fidelity in other respects, he retired from the neighbourhood of Timnath. "His anger was kindled, saith the Scripture, and he went up to his father's house;" upon which his wife was given to his companion whom he had used as his friend.

* Judges xiv. 18.; and Josephus' Antiquities, book v. c. 8.

The desire of a commentator to say something new often leads the reader into difficulties which must otherwise have escaped observation. "It may well be questioned," says Stackhouse, "upon what occasion Samson could meet with thirty Philistines, all clothed in their new and best attire, even though we allow that he went with a disposition to pick a quarrel with them and slay them." The good vicar of Beenham here takes it for granted, that the shirts and garments were to be *new*; a circumstance which is not so much as alluded to in any stage of the compact between Samson and his paranymphs. According to our notions of such matters, indeed, it is not easy to conceive that men, on such an occasion, would either give or take old clothes. But the ancients were not so fastidious: and we may discover from the impatience of Samson's companions to find out the riddle, that they were apprehensive of losing the very garments which they had upon them. "Have ye called us," said they to the bride, "to take what we have? Is it not so?"*

Nor is the suggestion of Bishop Patrick, who seems to have felt the difficulty before Stackhouse, to be held as quite satisfactory. "He slew thirty of them," says he, "as they were making merry, it is probable, either in the field or the city, at some public solemnity, when great companies used to be gathered together, and to appear in their best apparel."† But the learned prelate ought to have recollected that a public solemnity, when all the inhabitants of a city were collected together, was the most unfavourable occasion possible for performing such an achievement. No doubt, it is said that the Spirit of the Lord was upon Samson, and in the might of that Spirit, we

* Judges xiv. 15.

† Patrick's Commentary upon Judges, vol. ii. p. 157.

must acknowledge, no undertaking was too arduous; but we find, notwithstanding, that in most cases, the supernatural aid granted by heaven did not supersede the use of ordinary means, nor warrant any rash departure from the rules of prudence and the limits of human calculation.

When his resentment had abated, Samson went down once more to Timnath to see his wife; not being aware, we may presume, of the manner in which she had been disposed of, subsequently to their late quarrel. But finding himself so injuriously treated both by his father-in-law and his friend, he immediately resolved to gratify his revenge upon the whole district in which they lived. He went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails: and when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives.

An event so singular as that now mentioned could not fail to create among linguists and commentators a great variety of curious speculations. That fires were often raised by attaching to wild animals combustible substances in a stage of ignition, is proved by some very striking historical notices, which the industry of the learned has collected from the works of the ancients.* For example,

* To this practice Mr Richardson alludes, when he relates, that "in December, on the shortest night of the year, was the anniversary of the great festival of Fire, called among the Parsis *Sheb sezé*; when their temples were illuminated, and large piles of fire blazed all over the kingdom; round which the people entertained themselves all night with choral dances, and various amusements peculiar to the season. Amongst other ceremonies common on this occasion, there was one which, whether it originated in superstition or caprice, seems to have been singularly cruel and pernicious. The kings and great men used to set fire to large bushes of dry combustibles fastened round wild beasts and birds; which being then let loose, the air and earth appeared one great illumination: and as those terrified creatures naturally fled to

there was at Rome an annual celebration which had so great a resemblance to the performance of Samson, that, according to certain authors, the latter is supposed to have been borrowed from the former. At the feast of Cerealia, foxes were introduced into the circus with firebrands fastened to their tails; when these animals were formally put to death, in the presence of the assembled multitude, in retaliation for the injuries which they are said to have produced, at a remote period, among fields of standing corn. Ovid, in the fourth book of his *Fasti*, embodies this tradition with the history of the other religious rites of the Roman people, in his usual happy manner. He undertakes to explain the origin of a ceremony so remarkable:

> Cur igitur missæ vinctis ardentia tædis
> Terga ferant vulpes: causa docenda mihi.

He narrates that, when on a journey from Rome to Peligni, he passed a night at the house of an old friend at Carseoli, who informed him, that once upon a time, a boy in that neighbourhood caught a fox, which had long committed depredations upon his poultry. The youth thirsting for revenge, wrapped up his captive in ropes of hay or straw, fastened carefully round its body; and then setting fire to the inflammable material, let the creature loose to rejoin its companions in the wild. The fox, terrified by the flame, made its way through numerous fields of corn; where the fire, being assisted by a high wind, destroyed the ripe grain to a vast extent. A law was immediately passed at Carseoli, forbidding any

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the woods for shelter, it is easy to conceive, that conflagrations which would often happen, must have been peculiarly destructive, where a people considered the extinguishing of fire by water as one of the highest acts of impiety."—*A Dissertation on the Languages, Literature, and Manners of Eastern Nations. By John Richardson, Esq.* 1778.

one to save the life of a fox which might happen to fall into his hands: and in following out the provisions of the said enactment, it became customary to put the animal to death by burning it in straw, agreeably to the method suggested by the youth whose failure in the act of meditated revenge was thereby commemorated.*

Bochart will not accede to the opinion that the festival of *Vulpinalia* at Rome could have originated in an incident at once so obscure and trifling. He argues, moreover, that the foxes were not brought into the circus wrapt up in straw as they were at Carseoli, but with firebrands fastened to their tails. The month, too, in which

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* Frigida Carseolis nec olivis apta ferendis
Terra, sed ad segetes ingeniosus ager.
Hâc ego Pelignos natalia rura petebam
Parva, sed assiduis obvia semper aquis.
Hospitis antiqui solitas intravimus ædes;
Dempserat emeritis jam juga Phœbus equis.
Is mihi multa quidem, sed et hæc narrare solebat;
Unde meum præsens instrueretur opus:
Hoc ait in campo (campumque ostendit) habebat
Rus breve cum duro parca colona viro.
Ille suam peragebat humum; sive usus aratri
Sive cavæ falcis, sive bidentis erat.
Hæc modo verrebat stantem tibicine villam
Nunc matris plumis ova fovenda dabat.
Aut viridis malvas, aut fungos colligit albos
Aut humilem grato calfacit igne focum.
Et tamen assiduis exercet brachia telis
Adversusque minas frigoris arma parat.
Filius hujus erat primo lascivus in ævo
Addideratque annos ad duo lustra duos.
Is capit extremi vulpem sub valle salicti:
Abstulerat multas illa cohortis aves.
Captivam stipula fœnoque involvit, et ignes
Admovet, urentes effugit illa manus.
Qua fugit, incendit vestitos messibus agros:
Damnosis vires ignibus aura dabat.
Factum abiit: monumenta manent, nam vivere captam
Nunc quoque lex vulpem Carseolana vetat.
Unde luat pœnas gens hæc, Cerealibus ardet:
Quoque modo segetes perdidit ipsa perit.

Ovidii Fast. lib. iv. v. 681—712.

the festival was kept corresponded with the time of harvest in Palestine, but not with the same season either at Rome or Carseoli: In a word, he is satisfied that the Romans commemorated by a yearly observance, the exploit which was performed by the son of Manoah against the enemies of his country.*

Although the reasoning of Bochart does not carry with it complete conviction, the most sceptical reader must admit that it is not altogether destitute of probability. It is somewhat remarkable, too, that a fox with a firebrand at its tail had become, even among the Greeks, a proverbial expression for a cunning mischievous person. In the Nauplius of Lycophron, for example, a person is described whose evil propensities are shadowed forth by the qualities of a fox with a blazing extremity; but, although this passage has been quoted by Bryant and Stackhouse, as a proof that the animal in question was occasionally armed with fire, the real allusion of the author was to certain natural qualities which he thought proper to clothe in a figurative expression.*

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* Absit è nobis ut ritus tam solennis originem arcessamus a tam obscuris initiis. An, quia vulpes una, *Carseolis* fœno ardente involuta, paucas segetes in fuga exussit, *Romæ* certa die quotannis plures vulpes emitti debuerunt cum tædis caudæ alligatis? Quin a Phœnicibus id ortum est, qui rei apud se gestæ famam paulatim disseminarunt. Itaque verisimile est incendium illud eo ipso die accidisse, quo Romæ vulpes in circum emittebantur, et in illius incendii memoriam id primo à Phœnicibus, deinde Phœnicum exemplo etiam ab aliis esse factitatum. Indidem videtur sumptum, quod *Bœoli*, quibus olim Phœnices imperaverant quidvis incendi credebant, si certa quædam animalia, blattæ nimirum, et vulpes, et testudines cum facibus affixis emitterentur.—*Bocharti Hieroz.* lib. iii. p. 856.

† Της Σισυφιας δ' αγκυλης λαμπουριδος
Λαμψει κακον φρυκτωρον ἀυτανιψιος.
Lycoph. De Naup. v. 344. *apud Bochart.*

At verse 1393 he speaks of another female (for it is neither Ulysses nor Nauplius that is called λαμπουρις) the daughter of Erisichthon, whom he likewise describes as,

I know not whether it be worth while to mention the fancy of a French author, quoted by M. Bernard, who thinks that instead of foxes, Samson set fire to three hundred sheaves of corn; which he contrived to select from such a position in a field of corn as to extend the conflagration over a great part of the surrounding country. There is, no doubt, a certain resemblance between the Hebrew terms, which signify respectively *foxes* and *sheaves;* while the word which is translated *tail,* means the end or latter part of any object whether natural or artificial. Thus, says he, the last sheaf of a shock of corn is called the tail; the part to which Samson applied fire, when he proceeded to avenge the insult which he had received from his wife's relations.*

When the author of this calamity was made known to the Philistines, they resolved to remove at once the cause of his anger, rather than expose themselves to the repetition of similar attacks. They knew how much reason he had to complain of the Timnite, his father-in-law, who had taken his wife and given her to his companion, and therefore they came up and burnt her and her father with fire. But Samson, either dissatisfied with their motives in this cruel action, or still thinking that his own sufferings were unavenged, fell upon a band of their countrymen,

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Της παντομορφου βασσαρας λαμπουριδος:
Meretricis vulpeculæ quæ in omnes se mutabat formas.

Is it not surprising that Bryant and Stackhouse should have imagined that the poet could apply such epithets to Ulysses or Nauplius, as were only suited to a licentious and crafty female?

* See Saurin, Discours. xvii. M. Bernard, in the *Republique des Lettres,* Oct. 1717, p. 407, makes an extract, of which the above notice contains the substance, from an anonymous work on Balaam's ass, the foxes of Samson, the jaw-bone of the ass, the ravens of Elijah, Antichrist, &c. The same work is also referred to by Stackhouse, who (after Saurin) regrets that he could not find the original performance.—*Stackhouse,* vol. ii. p. 89. Edit. 1817.

whom he vanquished with great slaughter. He smote them hip and thigh, says the Scripture; after which he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam.*

These personal encounters had not hitherto been regarded as any infraction of the treaty which appears to have subsisted, at that period, between the Philistines and the contiguous tribes of the Hebrew people. But the former finding that the enmity of Samson was equal to his strength, determined to put an end to the vexatious warfare which he conducted on their borders; and with this view they marched a body of troops into the territory of Judah, and established a regular encampment in the neighbourhood of Lehi. To avert the evils accompanying such an invasion, the men of Judah remonstrated with Samson on the irregularity and pernicious effects of his behaviour towards the Philistines; reminding him that the nation against which he directed his assaults, was acknowledged as their superiors; and insisted that he should allow himself to be delivered into their hands, as a pledge and security for future peace.†

The result of this conference is too well known to require a lengthened or minute description. Samson agreed to the proposal of his countrymen; so far at least as to permit them to bind him and bring him into the presence of the

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* Judges xv. 7, 8. Etam was a strong place in the tribe of Judah, to the top of which no more than one person could ascend abreast, and therefore easily defensible. By all this, however, and what follows in the history of Samson, it is plain that he had no commission from God, nor was moved by any extraordinary impulse to make open war, (as did Gideon, Jephthah, and others,) for the deliverance of Israel from the yoke of the Philistines; but only to weaken them and keep them in awe, that, out of dread of him, they might be less cruel in their oppression; and that this was all that God intended to do by him is pretty plain from the words of the angel, Judges xiii. 5. "He shall begin to deliver Israel."—*Patrick, Josephus, Wells, and Stackhouse.*

† Judges xv. 9—12.

enemy. But no sooner was he carried in sight of the Philistine camp, than the supernatural spirit was roused within him, and delivered him from the death or captivity with which he was threatened. "And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands. And he found a new jaw-bone of an ass, and put forth his hand and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith."*

The scene of this remarkable victory was named from the instrument by means of which it had been achieved: it was called Ramath-Lehi, the *wielding or brandishing of the Jaw-bone.*† But I must refer the reader to the works of Bochart, Leclerc, Patrick, Calmet, and Pool, for the verbal criticism to which this obscure narrative has given occasion. In particular, the fact recorded in the nineteenth verse has led to a great variety of opinion and much learned discussion. God clave a hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when Samson had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof En-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day.

The whole difficulty here arises from the circumstance that the word *Lehi*, denotes both a place and a bone; and

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* Judges xv. 14, 15.

† Patrick prefers the words "projection or throwing away of the jaw-bone, as the Chaldee and Kimchi interpret it; for so the word Rama signifies, to throw any thing from one." But רמת is probably derived from רם, which signifies to be raised, or elevated, or lifted up; and it is more likely that Samson should name the place where he defeated his enemies from the *taking up* of the weapon, than from the casting it away. The Hebrew term, besides, is not רמה, but רמת. The opinion given in the text is in some degree confirmed by the version of the Vulgate. "Cumque hæc verba canens complesset, projicit mandibulam de manu, et vocavit nomen illius loci Ramathlechi, quod interpretatur *elevatio maxillæ.*" Geddes calls the place, *Jaw-bone Hill.*

hence it will for ever remain doubtful whether the water which quenched the thirst of Samson proceeded from a hole in the jaw or in the ground. Were we to assume that the miracle was performed by extracting water from the earth, this passage of Scripture would be at once intelligible and perfectly consistent; for we should then read that Jehovah opened a cavity that was in Lehi, from which flowed a stream of water; and when Samson had drunk, his spirit came again and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof *the fountain of him who called upon God*, which is in Lehi unto this day. This is the view taken of the above remarkable occurrence by Archbishop Usher. In the place, says he, which was called Lehi, from the celebrated jaw-bone, God, being entreated by Samson, brought forth a fountain from a certain hollow place in the earth, which recruited the strength of the warrior, now wearied and thirsty. In quo loco, a maxilla illa Lechi nomen adepto, a Samsone invocatus Deus, fisso cavo quodam terræ, fontem produxit, (*En-hakkore*, sive *Fontem invocantis*, appellatum) qui e labore sitientem et fatiscentem refocillaret. But it must not be concealed that many learned commentators have interpreted the passage in its more literal sense; and have, accordingly, ascribed the deliverance of Samson to a copious supply of the aqueous fluid drawn from such a hole in the jaw-bone of an ass as could be made by the extraction of a large tooth.*

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* See Bocharti Hieroz. Part. prim. lib. ii. c. xvi.; and Patrick on the place.

The following remark by Houbigant is not undeserving of the learned reader's attention. שמה, *nomen ejus*, affixum femininum, etsi nullum nomen femininum, ad quod pertinere possit, antecedit. Antecedunt מכתש et לחי. Est מכאש, *rupes*, masculinum, ut liquet ex ממנו, affixo masculino. Nec pertinet ad לחי *Lechi* affixum ה. Nam datur nomen non loco, qui

The character of Samson partook so much of the infirmity which belonged to his countrymen, that every instance of divine protection was almost immediately followed by an act of presumption and disobedience. His victory over the Philistines seems to have led him either to despise too much their power, or to place an undue confidence in his own fortune and resources. After having slain a thousand of their soldiers in the valley of the Jaw-bone, he repaired to Gaza, one of their fortified cities, where, saith the Scripture, he saw a harlot and went in unto her.* Perhaps the ambiguous language of the Hebrews, which identified the mistress of an inn with a female of impure reputation, has established an opinion relative to Samson's conduct on this occasion, which is equally unfavourable and unjust. Josephus relates, that, after the fight at Lehi, the son of Manoah held the Philistines in contempt, and went to Gaza and took up his lodgings at a certain inn.†

But whatever might be the character of the woman in whose house he took up his abode, Samson was not permitted to enjoy in it either rest or tranquillity. The

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Lechi, sed *fonti*. Atqui *fons* non antecessit. Hæc incommoda vidit Vulgatus, cum converteret, *nomen illius loci*. Legitur in Codice Alex. Τῆς πλήγης, corruptè pro πηγης, *fontis*. Quo ipso lector satis monetur το שמה esse laciniam scriptionis antiquæ שם העין, *nomen fontis*, et legendum bis עין hoc modo; שם העין עין הקוראּ, (et vocavit) *nomen fontis* fontem invocantis. *He called the name of the fountain, the fountain of him who invoked.*

* Judges xvi. 1.

† Antiquities, book v. c. 8. Bishop Patrick does not, in this instance, take the merciful side in respect to the character of the lady who accommodated the hero of Dan.. "She kept, it is likely, a public house to entertain strangers; but was as public herself; which had been the condition of Rahab." He is more candid in regard to the motives of Samson, who, he thinks, went to Gaza secretly and unobservedly in the dusk of the evening, or in a disguise, that he might the better spy in what posture they were, and what advantage he might possibly have of them.—*Commentary upon Judges, chap. xvi.*

rulers of the city were soon informed that their great enemy lay concealed within its walls; and hoping now to put an end to the terror and annoyance with which his stratagems had so often filled their country, they secured the gates and surrounded his lodgings with armed men. But Samson's hour was not yet come. Being made acquainted with this movement on the part of the Philistine chiefs, "he rose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city and the two posts and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of a hill that is before Hebron."*

Samson escaped from one danger only to fall into another, greater and more fatal. In the valley of Sorek he became acquainted with the mercenary Delilah; into whose hands he delivered up his patriotism, his fame, and his life. The lords of the Philistines were no sooner informed of this unhappy connection, than they resolved to employ the deceitful woman as the instrument of his destruction; promising her a large sum of money should she succeed in enabling them to take possession of his person. Josephus tells us that she began her evil work by flattering the pride of her victim, and by extolling his wonderful exploits: expressing, at the same time, the utmost curiosity to know wherein his astonishing prowess consisted, and by what means he had attained a degree of strength so much exceeding that of all other men. The evasions to which he had recourse, prove at once his weak-

* The distance from Hebron to Gaza is usually calculated at twenty miles; "but it is more probable," says bishop Patrick, on the authority of Peter Martyr, "that the hill in question lay between Gaza and Hebron; within the view of both: That the inhabitants of the one city might behold them to their confusion; and they of the other to their encouragement to hope for deliverance."—*Commentary upon Judges, chap. xvi.*

ness and his apprehension of the snares with which he saw himself surrounded. He first sacrificed truth, and then, religion. In the commencement of his troubles he relinquished personal honour; and he ended by abjuring his profession as a person dedicated to heaven. He broke the vow of his Nazaritism; and from that moment his great strength went from him. He allowed the razor to come upon his head, and he instantly became weak, and was like any other man. "And he awoke out of his sleep and said, I will go out as at other times before. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. But the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass."*

The narrative of Josephus in this particular corresponds exactly to that of the inspired historian. "Samson," says he, "worn out with Delilah's importunities, was induced to inform her that he was under the special protection of the Almighty; that he had been born by his particular Providence; that he had been consecrated to him from his infancy; and hence, he added, I suffer my hair to grow, God having charged me never to poll my head, and, accordingly, my strength always bears proportion to the increase and continuance of my hair. When she had learned thus much, and had deprived him of his hair, she delivered him up to his enemies, when he was not strong enough to defend himself; so they put out his eyes and bound him, and had him led about amongst them. In a word, the beginning of his miseries was that he transgressed the laws of his country, altered his own

* Judges xvi. 20, 21.

regular way of living, and imitated the strange custom of foreigners."*

As the Philistines had promised to the woman of Sorek that they would not take away the life of Samson, but merely bind him and afflict him, they threw him into a prison-house, where he was condemned to severe and unremitting labour. They made him grind in the mill like a slave. But after a certain time the hair of his head began to grow again; and, together with that mark of Nazarite innocence, his strength was observed to return in such a degree as to attract the notice of his taskmasters. Accordingly, on a national festival, when the people were assembled to return thanks to their god for having delivered into their hands the destroyer of their country, the lords of the Philistines, elated with wine, gave orders that Samson should be brought into their presence to amuse them. They sent for him, says Josephus, to insult him in their cups. The roof of the temple or pavilion in which they were carousing, rested on two pillars; and they set him between the pillars. "And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there: and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport. And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was

* Josephus' Antiquities, book v. chap. 8.

borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein: so the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life. Then his brethren, and all the house of his father, came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol, in the burying-place of Manoah his father: and he judged Israel twenty-years."*

The melancholy fate of Samson, as well as the particular circumstances which attended his death, have presented to the professional expositor and critic an ample field for curious dissertation. Some have imagined that Delilah must have effected her treacherous purposes by

* The eastern method of building may assist us in accounting for the particular structure of the temple, or house of Dagon, and the great number of persons that were buried under it, by pulling down the two principal pillars. We read, that about three thousand persons were upon the roof, to behold while Samson made sport to the scoffing and deriding Philistines. Samson must therefore have been in the court or area below them, and consequently the temple will be of the same kind with the ancient *τεμενη*, or sacred enclosures. The palaces and courts of justice, in those countries, are frequently built with a court, or enclosure, surrounded either in part, or on all sides, with some plain or cloistered buildings: in these, on their times of festival and public rejoicing, the wrestlers, and other professors of the gymnastic art, perform in the area, while the roof of the cloisters round about is crowded with spectators. "I have often seen several hundreds of people diverted in this manner upon the roof of the Dey's palace at Algiers; which, like many more of the same quality and denomination, hath an advanced cloister *over against the gate of the palace*, (Esther, v. 1.) made in the fashion of a large pent-house, supported only by one or two contiguous pillars in the front, or else in the centre. In such open structures as these, in the midst of their guards and counsellors, are the *bashaws, kadees*, and other great officers, assembled to distribute justice and transact public business. Here, likewise, they have their public entertainments, as the Lords of the Philistines had in the house of Dagon. On the supposition, therefore, that in the house of Dagon there was a cloistered structure of this kind, the pulling down of the front or centre pillars only, which supported it, would be attended with the catastrophe which befell the Philistines."—*Shaw's Travels*, vol. i. p. 390. Edit. 1808.

means of magic; it being almost impossible to believe that a person of common discernment could have allowed himself to fall a victim to allurements of which the object was so little disguised. How was it possible, says Saurin, that a man already deceived by one woman could let himself be deceived by another, in a manner still more palpable and gross. Why did he not suspect the insatiable curiosity of Delilah; and why was he so weak as to gratify it? How was it that this hero, who had courage to fight with a lion and strength to overcome it, who had made so many Philistines bite the dust, and performed so many other extraordinary exploits—how was it that he could not withstand the solicitations of an abandoned female? Happy are those readers, he concludes, who find not a solution of all these doubts and difficulties, in the history of their own weakness!*

Those who have taken the trouble to compare sacred history with fable, have discovered not only that the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter is met by a parallel occurrence in the case of Iphigenia, but also that the conduct of Delilah towards Samson bears a striking resemblance to the treachery which the daughter of Nisus practised against her father. This prince was besieged in Megara by his enemy Minos. Six months had already passed without success, when it was discovered that the fate of the city depended upon a tuft of red hair which was said to be concealed among the bushy ringlets of the king. His daughter, who had fallen in love with the assailant,

* Quelques-uns ont cru qu'on ne sauroit satisfaire a ces questions sans supposer que Dalila eut recours aux secrets de la magie. Mais a quoi bon cette supposition? Des complaisances menagées, des larmes affectées, des coleres simulées, des retours etudiés, furent sans doute tous les charmes et tous les sortileges dont cette enchanteresse eut besoin dans cette occasion. Encore une fois, heureux celui qui ne trouvera dans l'histoire des ses propres foiblesses la solution de ces difficultés!

stole into his chamber while he was asleep, cut out the fatal lock, and carried it to Minos, as the strongest proof of her affection. The gates were opened to the besiegers; but the undutiful damsel, so far from receiving the reward she expected, was spurned by the conqueror, who detested her unnatural perfidy.*

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* See Huet Demonstrat. Evangel. prop. iv. Saurin, Discours. xvii., and Ovid. Metam., lib. viii. fab. 1.

Ovid alludes, in his characteristic manner, to this story, in the eighth book of his Metamorphoses.

Interea Minos Lelegëia littora vastat:
Prætentatque sui vires Mavortis in urbe
Alcathöe, quam Nisus habet; cui splendidus ostro
In honoratos medio sub vertice canos
Crinis inherebat magni fiducia regni.

Prima queis aderat: qua curis fessa diurnis
Pectora somnus habet, thalamos taciturna paternos
Intrat; et (heu facinus) fatali nata parentem
Crine suum spoliat; prædaque potita nefanda
Fert secum spolia celeris: progressaque porta
Per medios hostes (meritis fiducia tanta est)
Pervenit ad regem: quem sic affata paventem.
Suasit amor facinus; proles ego regia Nisi
Scylla tibi trado patriosque, meosque penates.
Met. lib. viii. v. 6, 83.

On the same subject, Grotius quotes the following verses:—

Nam capite a summo regis, mirabile dictu,
Candida cæsaries, florebant tempora lauro,
Et roseus medio fulgebat vertice crinis:
Cujus quàm servata dia natura fuisset,
Tam patriam incolumem Nisi, regnumque futurum
Concordes stabili firmârunt numine Parcæ.

Theologians have been divided on the question whether the hair of Samson was to be regarded as the cause of his great strength, or simply as a physical indication of it; or, lastly, as a token of his fidelity to the Nazarite vow, upon which the countenance of Jehovah depended. The most part of the fathers and ancient interpreters hold this last opinion; which, indeed, is the only one that has any appearance of common sense and probability.* But although they all admitted that a profusion of hair could give no additional vigour to the human body, and even that it was not always a certain

* Calmet, Dict. sous le mot SAMSON.

Other commentators have traced in the history of Samson the person and exploits of the Theban Hercules. They have found out that the names of both have the same signification, and denote the sun; that the epochs at which they flourished agree; that their figures and great bodily strength present a striking resemblance; and finally, that their actions and characters are so much alike, that they cannot but be ascribed to the same original.

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indication of that quality in the best constructed frames, it is nevertheless true, that the mystical notions which they encouraged respecting the locks of Samson, gave rise, at a subsequent period, to many whimsical fancies relative to supernatural gifts. It was imagined, that those who had received from the demon a power more than human, carried, on some part of their body, an external mark of their singular endowment; and as it might not be convenient to have such a token visible to every eye, the favoured individual usually chose to have it impressed where it would be concealed either by a natural or an artificial covering. Thus, in the days when it became one of the principal duties of the priest and the judge to purify the Christian world from witchcraft, sorcery, and divination, particular pains were taken to discover, on the persons of the accused, the diabolical signature, in virtue of which they exercised their wicked arts. Among the means used for this purpose, shaving was the most common; a process which was conducted with great formality, and agreeably to rules which in no case were to be hastily violated. As it was generally inflicted immediately before the regular torture, the following instructions were given:—

Dum ministri se parant ad torquendum, alii interea expolient reum; (si sit mulier, expolianda fuerat a mulieribus aliis antequam ad carcerem ducatur) ne quid in vestimentis lateat maleficii. Tertio, debent capilli capitis et barbæ abradi, immo et per totum corpus etiam in partibus secretioribus; si fœminæ sint a fœminis, si viri a viris, &c.

Et hoc remedium multum prodesse, inter alios duobus exemplis lectu dignissimis, sed propter prolixitatem nunc a me omittendis, quorum ipse testis oculatus et index fuit, confirmat Jud. Damhanærius. In hac tonsione illud moneo observandum: si fiat duntaxat, ne maleficium lateat foraminibus corporis insertum, vel crinibus inspersum, rite id fieri: eademque causa putarem, ne qua unctio subisset, etiam totum corpus aqua calida prius diligenter abluendum: sed si tonsio fierit ea opinione quod per eam robur corporis et animi fortitudo pereat, exemplo Samsonis (in quo totum id divina virtute contingebat) et etiam documento Apollonæi Tyanæi; putarim serio hoc esse magicum et superstitiosum.

The learned author shews due care to obviate the conclusion, that every hairy man must be a bad man, a conjuror, or a diviner; because he does not regard depilationem illam ut ablationem signi, cum pili non sunt signa maleficii, sed latibula; that is, hair is not a proof of witchcraft or of sorcery, but the place in which these dangerous powers are concealed.

Samson killed a lion; so did Hercules. Samson carried away the gates of Gaza; Hercules performed a similar exploit, when he took upon his shoulders the two pillars which bear his name, and which have been called by Pindar the "gates of Cadęs." The Hebrew slew the Philistines because they had deprived him of his bride; the Theban inflicted a similar punishment upon Lycus, for an attempt upon his wife Megara. The ruling passion of Samson, too, is that which fable ascribes to Hercules. We have seen the former sacrificing to pleasure the miraculous gifts with which he was endowed: the latter is said to have fallen into the same snares. In other respects, perhaps, a resemblance of character and conduct may be perceived; which, though it has been pushed too far, and been made the basis of very absurd conclusions, does unquestionably favour the opinion that the principal features of the pagan hero have been borrowed from the inspired description of the Jewish champion.*

While Samson employed his supernatural strength against the enemies of Israel in the field, the civil government was directed by Eli the high priest; so far at least as the ascendency of the Philistines on the western borders would permit the exercise of a separate administration. The reader is aware that there has been among chronographers a great difference of opinion in regard to the beginning of Eli's judicature; some fixing it at the death of Samson, while others carry it back to the middle of the Philistine servitude. But it admits not of doubt, that, whatever civil privileges or independence remained to the Hebrews during the forty years of their subjection, the

* See Huet Dem. Evang. prop. iv. Vossius de Idol. lib. i. c. 22. Patrick upon Judges xvi. Euseb. Præp. Evang. Herodot. lib. iv. cap. 82. Pausan. in Lacon. Monfaucon. Antiquité Expliquée.

management of their affairs must have been intrusted to other hands than those of the son of Manoah. It is very probable, indeed, that amidst the successive wars which desolated their country, intervals occurred at which there was no judge whose authority was acknowledged by all the tribes of Israel; and as Jephthah appears to have limited his command to the eastern side of Jordan, there is every reason to believe that the influence which accompanied the exploits of Samson did not extend beyond the inheritances of Judah and of Dan. But without pursuing those inquiries to any greater length, I hasten to conclude this historical sketch of the Hebrew commonwealth, which has already occupied more than the space to which it was meant to be confined.

The administration of Eli received a remarkable distinction from the birth of Samuel the prophet; who being received like Samson as a gift from heaven, was likewise dedicated by his parents to the service of God. "For this child, I prayed," said his mother; "and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore also have I lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."* The boy was accordingly delivered to the high-priest, who employed him in such duties as so young a person could discharge; the lineage of Samuel, which was derived from Levi the father of the sacred tribe, giving him a full title to enter upon the service of the tabernacle.

But it is not undeserving of remark, that the son of Elkanah did not spend all his days in attendance upon the tabernacle. On the contrary, he entered at an early age into public life; allowed himself to be charged with the

* 1 Samuel i. 27, 28.

cares of a civil ruler; and even accompanied the armies of his countrymen to the field of battle. The dedication, therefore, of a man-child to the Lord, did not, if we may draw any inference from this particular case, positively restrict the Nazarite to a constant residence in the holy place, nor bind him to an uninterrupted discharge of the Levitical offices. The obligations imposed on Samuel by the pious gratitude of his parents, do not appear to have prevented him from engaging in any of the pursuits, or enjoying any of the pleasures of a secular calling. He was a judge and a magistrate; had a domestic establishment at Ramah; and, so far from being bound to a single life, he saw his sons arrive at sufficient maturity to be able to relieve him of part of his official burdens. "He went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. And his return was to Ramah, for there was his house."*

If, then, celibacy was unknown to the one sex, in the days when the Judges ruled, may we not conclude that it was equally unknown to the other; and consequently, that those who maintain that Jephthah's daughter was devoted to perpetual virginity as a servant at the tabernacle, proceed in their argument without a due attention to facts? There is no proof that the restraints of monastic life were assumed by women at an earlier period than by men. Nay, the history of superstition seems to countenance the opposite opinion; for in the temples of the East, particularly in that of the Syrian Venus, the devotees were males, who, when they became priests, disqualified themselves by a special act for ever becoming husbands.† In the annals of the ancient Hebrews, we find not the

* 1 Samuel vii. 16, 17.

† See the Syrian Goddess ascribed to Lucian.

most distant allusion to celibacy viewed as a religious duty. If the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle aspired to that distinction, the conduct of the high-priest's sons demonstrates that many of them were not well prepared to keep their vow; for to the licentiousness which disgraced the precincts of the sacred dwelling is to be attributed much of the public as well as domestic wretchedness which clouded the latter end of Eli's life.*

In the fourth chapter of the first book of Samuel, we read of a battle between the Philistines and the Hebrews, in which the latter were defeated with the loss of four thousand men. No records have been preserved by means of which we could determine whether this struggle on the part of the Israelites was to recover the independence which they lost after the death of Abdon; or whether it was to defend their liberties, which may be supposed to have been restored after the forty years domination which began at that period. Some writers assert that the first battle of Ebenezer was an unsuccessful attempt to shake off the yoke of the Philistines, before the end of the sixth servitude. Others think that the forty years of which the times of Samson made a part, had not only expired, but that an interval of tranquillity had succeeded; and that this disastrous conflict, in which the sons of Eli were slain, paved the way for the seventh servitude or anarchy, as it is sometimes called, which is believed to have preceded the administration of Samuel. The latter opinion agrees better than the other with the general deductions of chronology, as well as with the narrative of St Paul in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts; for the four hundred and fifty years which the apostle assures us elapsed be-

* 1 Samuel iv. 16, 18.

tween the division of the land and the days of Samuel, cannot, it is clear, be comprehended in any numerical scheme which carries the sixth servitude down to the victory gained at Ebenezer under the auspices of the prophet; when he set up a stone for a memorial of the Divine goodness between Mizpeh and Shen.

Being repulsed in the first onset, the Hebrews attributed their want of success to the absence of the ark, which was still retained at Shiloh. And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, wherefore hath the Lord smitten us to-day before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord, So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts which dwelleth between the cherubims; and the sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there, with the ark of the covenant of God.*

But the ark was not carried unto the field by pure hands, nor was the Lord of hosts consulted respecting the issue. The people shouted, indeed, when they beheld the token of the Divine protection; but as they confined their thoughts to the mere external symbol, it proved of no avail to them in the hour of conflict. "The Philistines fought, and the children of Israel were smitten: and there was a very great slaughter, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain."† The heavy news of this disastrous field put an end to the life of the high-priest, after he had judged Israel forty years; for it came to pass, when a fugitive from the army made mention of the ark of God, that Eli

* 1 Samuel iv. 3, 4. † 1 Samuel iv. 10, 11—18.

fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died.*

To the Philistines, the most splendid trophy of their victory, the ark of the covenant, proved the cause of much suffering and desolation. Having placed it in the temple of their principal god at Ashdod, they had the mortification to find, on the following morning, that the image of their idol was dashed to the ground, and much mutilated. "Dagon had fallen on his face before the ark of the Lord; and the head of Dagon, and both the palms of his hands, were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him. Therefore," adds the historian, "neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon unto this day."†

It is a remarkable fact that, in almost all the countries of the East, a great veneration was shown for the threshold of their sacred houses. Instead of stepping upon it,

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* 1 Samuel iv. 18.

† 1 Samuel v. 4, 5. Selden a conclu de ces paroles que les Asdodéens renoncerent a leur idolatrie: cette pensée est fondée sur une traduction, dont elles sont susceptibles. On peut traduire; A cause de cette chute, les sacrificateurs et aucun de ceux qui alloient auparavant sur le seuil de Dagon, n'y allerent plus. Cela voudroit dire qu'ils n'assisterent plus aux devotions, qu'on fesait dans ce temple a l'honneur de Dagon.—*Selden de Diis Syriis*, syntag. 2, cap. iii. p. 187.

The above quotation, from Saurin's discourse on the "Return of the Ark," is incorrect. Selden has nowhere, in the chapter referred to, given any such opinion; and after a minute examination of the whole work on the Gods of Syria, I have not been able to account for the mistake of the learned minister of the Hague.

The following denunciation, in the first chapter and ninth verse of Zephaniah, has been thought by some commentators to bear an allusion to the practice now mentioned. "In the same day, also, will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their master's houses with violence and deceit." Perhaps this opinion is somewhat strengthened by the view taken of the text by the Chaldee paraphrast, who renders it, *All those who walk in the laws of the Philistines.*—See *Bochart. Hieroz.* part i. lib. ii. cap. 36.; and *Saurin*, Discours. xxiv.

the priests and others usually leaped over, and entered the temple without allowing the foot to come in contact with that part of the building. Non calcârunt amplius Deorum suorum limina, sed transilierunt. If they could not bound over the holy vestibule, they crept over upon their knees, and kissed it as they passed. Ovid, that great archæologist, takes notice of this practice in the case of Deucalion and his consort after the flood:

> Ut templi tetigêre gradus, procumbit uterque
> Pronus humi, gelidoque pavens dedit oscula saxo.*

Tibullus, in like manner, alludes to the same superstitious feeling when he says,

> Non ego, si merui, dubitem procumbere templis
> Et dare sacratis oscula liminibus.†

Virgil himself speaks of the *Religiosa Deorum limina;* and in this he expresses the sentiments of all the heathen, who believed that there was something sacred in the thresholds of their divinities. Putabant Gentiles templorum vestibulis Numen aliquod inesse vel adesse.‡ Among the Romans the porch even of a private house was held sacred to the goddess Vesta; and hence, perhaps, was the reason that a bride did not put her foot upon the threshold of her husband's dwelling, when she entered it for the first time, lest she should incur the guilt of sacrilege and contumacy. Eadem videtur fuisse causa, quod nova apud Gentiles nupta non auderet limen mariti tangere, ne, ut Servius notat, a sacrilegio inchoaret, si depositura virginitatem calcaret rem Vestæ, id est Numini sanctissimo consecratam.

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* Metamor. lib. i. † Lib. i. eleg. 2.
‡ Caspar Hartzheim Explic. Fabul. p. 125.

A similar veneration was afterwards transferred to the vestibules of Christian churches, particularly when dedicated to any one of the twelve apostles; the steps of which have in some instances been almost worn away by the lips and knees of zealous worshippers.* But whatever connection this ancient usage may have had with the history of the ark, there is no doubt that it was very generally observed as well by pagans as by the followers of a better faith; and even in Persia, at the present day, as Calmet remarks, there are certain mosques, the thresholds of which are covered with plates of silver, on which the people are not permitted to tread; for that, says he, is a crime which cannot be expiated without undergoing very severe pains and penalties.

The displeasure of heaven on this occasion was not confined to the instruments of Philistine idolatry. The people of Ashdod were themselves visited with two distressing calamities; a plague of mice, and a sore bodily disease. "The hand of the Lord was upon them, and he destroyed them, and smote them with emerods, even Ashdod, and the courts thereof."† Suspecting that their afflictions were connected with the presence of the ark, they resolved

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* Ceterum meliori jure Christiani non solum templorum suorum adyta, sed etiam limina venerantur. Quam nota sunt et fuerunt a primis Ecclesiæ seculis limina beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli; qua cum veneratione non communis tantum populi, sed etiam regum et principum fuere visitata? S. Chrysostomus, hom. 26 in poster. epis. ad Corinthios, refert quali in estimatione et reverentia fuerint vestibula et limina apostolorum etiam apud reges eadem invisentes: sic enim ait: *Quod in regiis janitores sunt Regibus, et in sepulchro Reges sunt Piscatoribus; et alii quidem velut ipsius loci domini, intus habitant, hi vero tanquam accolæ et vicini præclare secum agi putant, si janua ipsis assignetur vestibularis.* Idem, hom. 30, in 2 ad Corinth. *Templi vestibula et adytum osculamur.* Prudentius in peristeph. hymno 2. *ipsa et Senatûs limina, quondam Luperci et Flamines, Apostolorum ac Martyrum exosculantur limina.* Plura eorum exempla, qui piis votis, muneribus, osculisque eadem venerati sunt, vide apud Baronium ad annum Christi 631, et 689.—*Caspar Hartzheim Explic. Fabulorum*, p. 157.

† 1 Samuel v. 6.

to try whether the God of Israel would take greater pleasure in another city. They accordingly removed the sacred chest from Ashdod to Gath. This was no sooner done than the inhabitants of the latter place were smitten with the same evils which had been sent upon the former. The hand of the Lord was against the city with a very sore destruction; and he smote the city both small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts.* The Gathites made haste to transfer the holy symbol of the Hebrew theocracy to Ekron; a city more venerable than either of the other two, and distinguished among the idolaters themselves by the number of its shrines and images. But all their devices were to no purpose. Fear and disease accompanied the ark whithersoever it was carried. The very sight of it alarmed the Ekronites; and they cried out, "Let it go again to its own place, that it slay not us and our people, for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. And the men that died not were smitten with the emerods; and the cry of the city went up to heaven."†

The Philistines having no longer any reasonable ground to doubt that the pestilence with which they were wasted was sent upon them on account of the ark, resolved to restore it into the hands of the Israelites. Their priests recommended that an oblation or trespass-offering should be conveyed along with it; and, agreeably to the practice of those superstitious times, they farther suggested that the gold of which their offering was to consist should be wrought up into figures bearing a direct reference to the evils with which they had been afflicted. They made five golden emerods and five golden mice, according to

* 1 Samuel v. 9.

† 1 Samuel v. 10, 11, 12.

the number of the lords of the Philistines, and placed them in a coffer by the side of the ark on the cart; and having yoked two milk-cows, which had not yet been accustomed to the draught, they set the vehicle in motion towards the country of the Hebrews. The cows, as if led by a divine impulse, turned their faces in the direction of a village belonging to Judea. "They took the straight way to Beth-shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left: and the lords of the Philistines went after them to the border of Beth-shemesh."*

The villagers who were in the fields employed about their crops, experienced the most lively joy upon the sight of the ark; and imagining that on such a remarkable occasion they might dispense with the strict precept of their law, which forbade the performance of sacrifice except in the place where the Tabernacle was pitched, they yielded so far to the feeling of gratitude as to offer up the two cows as a burnt-offering unto Jehovah. This breach of the divine commandment, accompanied with the irreverent curiosity of looking into the ark, was punished by the death of seventy of their number; a circumstance which so terrified the rest, that they immediately entreated the people of Kirjath-jearim to relieve them of the cares of so formidable a deposit. And the men of Kirjath-jearim came and fetched up the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified his son Eleazar to keep it.†

In our version of the Bible it is said that the Lord smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men. But as Beth-shemesh was merely a village or

* 1 Samuel vi. 1—5. 12. † 1 Samuel vi. 20, 21, and vii. 1.

small Levitical town, it is very improbable that the inhabitants should amount to so great a number; and as the irregularity of which they were guilty must have been the work of a few individuals, it is not easy to see the justice of extending the punishment to the whole of the male population. Bochart suggests, that instead of fifty thousand, we should read *fifty in the thousand*; for, assuming that a thousand and four hundred were guilty, the proportion on whom the divine vengeance fell would amount precisely to threescore and ten. This mode of interpretation, which in similar cases is sanctioned by the usage of the best Hebrew scholars, removes the difficulty in question, and, at the same time, reconciles the narrative of Scripture to the statement of Josephus.*

I need hardly observe, that the conjectures of the antiquary and biblical critic are very various respecting the nature of the disease with which the Philistines were attacked, for their impieties towards the ark of the covenant. Josephus describes it as bearing a great resemblance to

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* Neque aliud sonabunt Hebræa verba, 1 Sam. vi. 19. si commode reddantur. Illa enim puto sic esse vertenda: *Et percussit* è Bethsemitis, *quia Domini arcam introspexerant, percussit*, inquam, *ex* illo *populo septuaginta homines, quinquaginta* scilicet è *mille hominibus*: ut sensus sit, Deum pro indulgentia sua noluisse in omnes reos animadvertere, sed è reis multo pluribus solum septuaginta morte mulctasse, hac proportione observata, ut pro mille reis nonnisi quinquaginta perirent.—*Vide Bocharti Hieroz.* part I. lib. ii. cap. 36, p. 370.

The Vulgate renders the passage thus: Percussit autem de viris Bethsamitibus, eo quod vidissent arcam Domini; et percussit de populo septuaginta viros, et quinquaginta millia plebis; following very closely the words of the Septuagint, και επαταξεν εν αυτοις εβδομηκοντα ανδρας, και πεντηκοντα χιλιαδας ανδρων.

Houbigant, on this text, remarks; pertinent *septuaginta homines* ad viros Bethsamis, quinquaginta millia ad ceterum populum, qui ex vicinis regionibus gregatim venerant, ut spectaculo arcæ fruerentur. In eo ordine non jam laborandum, ut explicetur, quomodo in Bethsamis pago quinquaginta millia hominum habitarent, quos neque agri Bethsamis suburbani continere potuissent.—*Notæ Criticæ in Sam. lib. prior. cap. vi.*

dysentery; others think that it was of the nature of piles or tumours in the rectum; while a third party are of opinion that the people of Ashdod and Gath were smitten by the anger of Jehovah in that organ of the body which distinguishes the sexes. Such a distemper seems to have been regarded by the ancients as the peculiar punishment of sacrilege. Herodotus, for example, relates, that when the Scythians, who had threatened Egypt with invasion, were on their return through Palestine, some of their stragglers robbed the temple of Venus at Askelon; for which crime they and their posterity were afflicted with emerods a long time afterwards. "This," says Dr Prideaux, "lets us know that the Philistines had till then preserved the memory of what they had formerly suffered on account of the ark of God. For from that time, it seems, they looked upon this disease as the proper punishment from the hand of God for all such like sacrilegious impieties; and for this reason assigned it to the Scythians in their histories, on their charging of them there with this crime.*"

A similar story is told of certain Athenians who had treated with irreverence the mysteries of Bacchus. The scholiast on Aristophanes, mentions, that when the horse Pegasus brought these mysteries from Bœotia into Attica, the people of the latter country, instead of receiving them with the pomp and magnificence which a gift so precious deserved at their hands, gave way to feelings of contempt and derision. The god, enraged at their conduct, smote the more guilty individuals with a sore disease in the secret parts. The sufferers immediately consulted the oracle for relief. The answer received by them conveyed the assurance that they could not obtain a cure until they had of-

* Herodot. lib. i. c. 105. Prideaux, Connection of Old and New Testament, part i. book 1, p. 46.

fered to Bacchus a representation of the members affected, wrought in carved or molten gold.*

After the death of Eli, twenty years and seven months appear to have elapsed before the Hebrews had a stated place of worship, or made any attempt to free themselves from the oppression of the Philistines. It came to pass, while the ark abode at Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.† Samuel took advantage of this disposition in the popular mind, and assured his countrymen that, if they would renounce their idolatrous practices and cleave unto Jehovah, their arm would again be strengthened so as to be able to shake off the terror of the enemy. Having acceded to the condition proposed by the prophet, the tribes met together at Mizpeh to avow their penitence, and to implore the protection of their own God; pouring out water before the Lord, and fasting and praying according to the instructions of Samuel.‡

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* Vid. Aristoph. Scholiast. in Acharn. art. 2. Spanheim in lavacrum Palladis, et Saurin, Discours. xxiv.

† 1 Samuel vii. 2.

‡ 1 Samuel vii. 5, 6. In the contrition displayed by the Israelites at Mizpeh, it is said, that "they drew water and poured it before the Lord." Usher thinks that this was a figurative expression for an abundant flood of tears which the penitent Hebrews shed on that occasion: "abjectis omnibus idolis suis, Mizpæ convenerunt; ibi aquam hausisse, id est, lachramatum rivos ex intimo fonte cordis eduxisse, et Domino dicuntur effudisse; adhibito etiam fortasse, huic resipiscentiæ significandæ, externo effusionis aquæ symbolo exponendo; quod de ipsorum tamen resipiscentium baptismo alii malunt accipere."—*Usseri Annales*, p. 27.

"Others think," says Patrick, "that they washed their bodies in water, signifying the purifying of their souls from the filthiness of sin: and others, (which Bochart thinks more probable) that water was poured on the ground, in token of the expiation of their sin, which they desired and hoped might be remembered no more: as water poured on the ground could no more be seen. Unto which they think a place in Job alludes; "Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away." But we nowhere find any such rite as this among the Jews, either in ancient or later times. Fortunatus Sacchus is of opinion, that, as an altar was to be erected

This movement among the Hebrews excited the jealousy of their conquerors, the lords of the Philistines, who immediately led against them a formidable army. The Israelites, trusting in Jehovah and in the wisdom of their prophet, ventured to engage their warlike enemy at Mizpeh; and as the Philistines drew near to battle, the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel. And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Beth-car. So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.*

Josephus describes, with a degree of minuteness that indicates at once a feeling of piety and of national triumph, the operation of the physical agents which were employed by the Almighty to discomfit the enemies of his people. Whatever share of belief may be due to the traditions which he has embodied in his history, there can be no doubt that the victory at Mizpeh was most decisive and important; for the Hebrews not only recovered much of the territory which they had lost in the times of the earlier judges, but also impressed upon the Philistines such a

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to offer sacrifice, they poured out water to cleanse the ground, that it might not be set up in an impure place. Constantine l'Empereur conjectures, that they poured out water in token of joy, after they had fasted and confessed their sins, as they were wont to do in the feast of Tabernacles.

But the most probable opinion is, that the water was poured out as a libation before God; for though the law of Moses does not enjoin any such observance, there is yet no positive prohibition of it; and as the practice was common among heathen nations, we may not unreasonably believe that the Hebrews sometimes adopted it. David acted from a religious, perhaps a superstitious feeling, "when he poured out unto the Lord," the water which the three brave men in his army brought from the well of Bethlehem at the risk of their lives.

* 1 Samuel vii. 11.—13.

dread of their arms as prevented every attempt at invasion for a long series of years.

I have mentioned, in the Preliminary Dissertation, that archbishop Usher and some other chronologers omit entirely the twenty years and seventh months which intervened between the capture of the ark and the battle which has just been described.* But no statement can be plainer than that which is made by the sacred writer in the seventh chapter of the first book of Samuel; where he narrates that the ark was twenty years at Kirjath-jearim; that the time was long; and that all the house of Israel, in consequence, lamented after the Lord. Besides, if we do not admit that a period of nearly equal duration elapsed before the victory achieved by Samuel, we must allow that he guided the counsels of Israel and directed the motions of their army, when he was yet but a lad or even little more than a child. Eli was so old when the fate of his house was predicted to him, that his eyes had begun to wax dim, that he could not see; whence it is by no means probable that many years passed away before the Divine threatening was fully realized. Samuel was in early childhood when the word of the Lord was first addressed to him; and even if we adopt the opinion of those who think that the high priest survived the painful revelation of God's wrath against his house, not less than ten years, the age of the prophet would still be incompetent to the grave and responsible duties which devolved upon the judge of the twelve tribes. The hypothesis of Usher, therefore, is not only inconsistent with the inspired record and the narrative of Josephus; it is also at variance with right reason, and the usual course of providence and of human nature.

* See pages 151, 152, 153, of this volume.

The government of the Hebrews continued twelve years under the presidency of Samuel; at the end of which the people, intimidated probably by the warlike attitude of Nahash, prince of the Ammonites, intreated the prophet to select for them a king, or captain of the host, to go out before them and fight their battles. The judge himself, who is supposed to have discharged occasionally the offices of the high priest, was in some degree disqualified for that appointment, so little in harmony with his more sacred calling. His sons had forfeited the good opinion of their countrymen; for they walked not in the way of their father, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.* Samuel, though displeased at the impious proposal, obtained permission to comply with it; and accordingly, after pointing out to them, in no measured language, the evils of monarchical rule, proceeded to gratify their desire by raising to the throne, Saul, the son of Kish, a Benjaminite and a mighty man of power.

The circumstances which accompanied the election of the Hebrew sovereign are narrated at length in the ninth and tenth chapters of the first book of Samuel. We there find that the elevation of Saul did not give universal satisfaction. His ability and family influence were thought unequal to the weighty duties of the kingly office. The disaffected, or, as they are called in Scripture, the sons of Belial, exclaimed, "How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents."

In these circumstances, the young king wisely sacrificed his personal feelings to the interests of his country. Being informed that the Ammonites had encamped against Jabesh-gilead, and were pressing the siege of the place with the most ferocious intentions, he employed the power which

* 1 Samuel viii. 3.

was recently put into his hands by calling forth the military array of Israel and Judah. At the head of three hundred and thirty thousand men he advanced against Nahash; and falling upon his host in the morning watch, he continued the slaughter until the heat of the day, when it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.*

This seasonable victory established the government of Saul over the Hebrew tribes. Resisting the instigation of those who were desirous that he should take revenge on the individuals who opposed his nomination as their sovereign, he displayed such a degree of magnanimity and forbearance as could not fail to excite the most flattering hopes respecting his future government. "And the people said unto Samuel, Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death. And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day; for to-day the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel."† The prophet made haste to improve these favourable sentiments for the stability of the newly-erected throne. He said to the people, "Let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace-offerings before the Lord; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly."‡

The event now mentioned put an end to the Hebrew commonwealth, which had subsisted from the days of Moses. The dynasty of Saul, indeed, terminated in his own person, when, together with his three sons, he fell in battle in the unfortunate field of mount Gilboa: and from

* 1 Samuel xi. 8, 11.
† 1 Samuel xi. 12, 13.
‡ 1 Samuel xi. 14, 15.

his death till the captivity of Judah, the children of Israel were ruled by kings descended from the house of David, the most distinguished of Jewish monarchs. But the history of the regal government belongs to a different part of this work; and will be resumed after I shall have attempted, in the second volume, to give a connected view of the annals of those other nations of the East which were contemporary with the Hebrew judges. I cannot, however, conclude the present section of my labour, without making a few reflections on the events and state of society which have just past under our notice.

The Hebrews, at the early period of their history which has just passed before us, present themselves to our observation as a people who were still in one of the simplest forms of society, and whose institutions had not received any impress from the knowledge and arts which distinguish civilized life. They had emerged from the state of the wandering shepherd, and were about to assume the more improved habits of the agriculturist. Their civil government was closely modelled on the pattern of domestic rule which originally guided the affairs of each patriarch's family, while they were yet following their herds in the deserts of Syria. Their laws, too, respecting property, were calculated to perpetuate that equality of condition which became the children of the same father, and upon which the foundations of their commonwealth were laid. We find no distinctions of rank among them but such as arose from age or office. Their magistrates were the elders of the people, assisted by the Levites, who expounded the law and enforced its sanctions; and their leaders in war were the princes and heads of families, who were allowed to invite to a share in their command, any individual whose skill and courage promised success in the field of battle.

The character and government of the judges withdraw

the attention of the reader from the ordinary course of human events, and fix it on the marvellous or supernatural. These personages were raised up by the special providence of God, to discharge the duties of an office which the peculiar circumstances of his people from time to time rendered necessary: and the various gifts with which they were endowed, as they constituted the sole vocation to their high employment, so were they suited to the difficulties which they had to overcome, and to the achievements which they were called to perform. The sanctity of their manners did not, indeed, in all cases correspond to the dignity of their station; and the miracles which they wrought for the welfare of their country, did not always extend to personal restraint and the due subordination of the passions. Their military exploits were worthy of the highest admiration; while, in some instances, their private conduct calls forth only our censure and regret. For examples of heroism and bravery, we can with confidence look to Gideon, to Samson, and to Jephthah; but there is not in their characters any thing besides that a father could recommend to the imitation of his son, or that a lover of order and pureness of living would wish to see adopted in modern society. We observe, in the greater part of them, uncommon and even supernatural powers of body, as well as of mind, united with the gross manners and the fierce passions of barbarians. We applaud their patriotism, admire their courage and talent in the field, and even share in the delight which accompanied their triumphs; but when they return to their dwellings, we dare not inspect too narrowly the usages of their domestic day, nor examine into the indulgencies with which they sometimes thought proper to remunerate the toils and cares of their public life. Divine Wisdom, stooping to the imperfection of human nature, employed the instruments which were best fitted

for the gracious ends which, by their means, were about to be accomplished; but it does not appear to have been intended that mankind should ever resort to the history of the Hebrew judges for lessons of morality or religion.

It is in the department of theology that the children of Israel were raised above all the other nations of those early days. Their belief in the unity of the eternal Creator of heaven and earth gives them a grand distinction in the ancient history of the East: for though their practice too frequently opposed their faith, they nevertheless preserved in their creed, as well as in the rites of their national worship, that fundamental doctrine of all true religion. It is by no means improbable that the philosophers of Egypt and the priests of Chaldea taught, in their secret schools, the same important dogma. In proportion as our knowledge of oriental antiquity is extended, we see greater reason to believe that the unity of the Divine nature was maintained by learned men even at the remotest periods. But we perceive not, in the public religion of any ancient people besides the Hebrews, the avowal of this tenet, how essential soever it may appear to the establishment of the simplest faith that can take possession of the human mind. In the Mosaical system, the unity of God is not only brought forward as the prominent article of belief, but the severest punishment that it anywhere denounces is directed against the violation of those precepts which enjoin the acknowledgment and the worship of the one Jehovah.

It has appeared, at the same time, that their notions of a future state and of the proper immortality of the human soul were extremely obscure. The tenet of the metempsychosis had been engrafted upon the philosophy of Egypt before the period when Moses was admitted to become a sharer in its wisdom; whence it is not unreasonable to believe, that his opinions respecting the thinking principle

in man were similar to those of his teachers, and consequently quite unsuitable for being made the basis of the sublime doctrine of future reward and punishment. On this account, as well perhaps as for others which cannot now be discovered, the assurance of retribution in the world to come was not used by the Divine lawgiver as the sanction of the moral and religious code which he conferred upon the Jews. The doctrine of the metempsychosis can be distinctly traced in the theological notions of that people immediately after their return from Babylon; and that it is not to be clearly found at an earlier period, is owing, I have no doubt, to the absence of all speculative works, by Hebrew writers, on the nature of mind and on the condition of man after death. That they believed in the separate existence of the soul, is evident from the conduct of their first king when he consulted the witch of Endor; and every one knows that this belief, at the epoch in question, was a part of the system which, in all other countries where it was held, taught men to expect, in new bodies, spirits which had formerly been occupied with the pursuits and pleasures of this lower world.

In regard to natural science, or a knowledge of the properties which distinguish material forms and of the laws by which their structure and succession are regulated, the history of the ancient Hebrews presents no facts that can enable us to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. Their festivals, which were restricted to certain seasons, would demand of them some slight acquaintance with the motions of the heavenly bodies, and lead them to attempt such calculations respecting the sun's course in the ecliptic, as would prevent the derangement of their religious calendar. Their use of bread and wine, too, proves that they were not ignorant of the principles of fermentation: while their armour and the statues of their gods, both molten and

carved, give evidence that they applied metals to the uses and ornament of life.

During the long interval from Joshua to Saul, we see no means provided for the regular worship of God throughout the tribes of Israel. In peaceful times, no doubt, and as long as the ark continued at Shiloh, the festivals appointed by their inspired lawgiver were, we may presume, observed three times every year: and, indeed, the occurrence which took place at one of those solemnities after the defeat of the children of Benjamin, affords satisfactory evidence that the precepts of Moses, relative to the feasts of the Lord, were not altogether neglected. But in the times which immediately followed the death of Eli, the holy seasons could not be accompanied with their appropriate celebrations. The symbol of the Divine Presence was for some years either in the hands of the enemy or under the charge of a private individual; and that the people did then not repair to it, in order to present their oblations before Jehovah, may be inferred from the observation of the sacred writer, that "while the ark abode at Kirjath-jearim, the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord."*

But, in addition to the stated sacrifices, there were other religious duties, prayer and the study of God's word, for which we find not that any provision was made. The Sabbath was to the Hebrews a day of mere rest and abstinence from worldly pursuits; and in the times of the judges they appear not yet to have built any of those proseuchæ, or places of prayer, in which the more pious offered up their private devotions; and which probably suggested, at a later period, the building of synagogues for divine worship and religious instruction at the end of

* 1 Samuel vii. 2.

every week. We may suppose that the Levites would take care to preserve among the people some knowledge of the law in its religious as well as its civil enactments, and perhaps to instruct them in the principles of truth and equity. But for all this we have no other authority than mere conjecture; while, on the other hand, the incessant deviations of the tribes into the practices of idolatry give too much reason to suspect that all ranks of men were equally ignorant and careless.

I have intentionally omitted the dates of the several events recorded in the foregoing narrative, as well as those at which the judges began and ended their respective administrations; for though there may be good ground for establishing a general conclusion in regard to the length of the period which elapsed between the days of Joshua and those of Saul, we are assuredly not supplied with a chronology sufficiently accurate to enable us to fix with certainty the place of every event in the course of nearly five centuries.

From the division of the land to the accession of the first Hebrew king there were, it is clear, four hundred and sixty-two years; for, from the first of these occurrences to the time of Samuel, the distance, according to St Paul, was four hundred and fifty years; while, from the beginning of the prophet's rule to that of the sovereign whom he anointed, there intervened twelve years; the sum of which corresponds exactly with the gross amount just specified.

If, then, to - - - - -	462
We add the period which preceded the division of the land, - - - - - -	46
And the reigns of Saul and David - -	80
With the four first of Solomon's, - -	
The space from the exode to the foundation of the temple will come out, as we formerly found, to	592

The only intermediate date on which we can rely with any confidence, is that which is mentioned by Jephthah in his negociation with the king of the Ammonites. He asserts that Israel had been in possession of the land, which the latter reclaimed, three hundred years;* and, according to the scheme of chronology which I have adopted, the length of time which had passed from the defeat of Sihon to the invasion of the Ammonites, is about three hundred and fifteen years; a period not much at variance with the round number used by the Gileadite, on an occasion, too, which did not call for much precision in point of language.

The chapter, then, which I now conclude, embraces the history of four hundred and forty-four years; beginning one thousand five hundred and forty-three before the birth of Christ, and ending one thousand and ninety-nine before the same era. In reference to the age of the world, the period extends from three thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight, to four thousand three hundred and forty-two.†

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* Judges xi. 26. See likewise Numbers xxi. 25.

† See Preliminary Dissertation, page 167.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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